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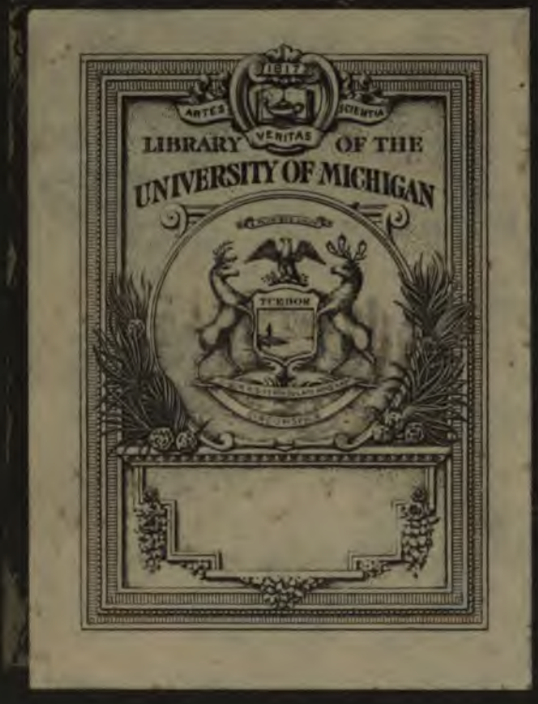
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266 **Shepherd** (Rev. Wm.). **Life of Poggio Bracciolini.** Vignette on Title. Roy. 4to, cf. extra, by Chas. Lewis. £12.00.

Liverpool, *McCreery*, 1802

*** Fine copy: one of few printed on fine paper. From the Beckford Library, with numerous notes on the fly-leaves by Beckford.

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P 740
S

Preface 11. [illegible] l'Enfant [illegible] of the Poggiana consisted of no less than 129 capital [illegible] if we are to believe [illegible] Observazioni critique.

17 After the most [illegible] waste of blood [illegible] the Managers [illegible] down [illegible] Status quo ante Bellum — "happy would it be [illegible] the Status [illegible] Widow of the Orphan — to the thousands [illegible] of the [illegible] destined to languish out the [illegible] of their lives in torment of decrepitude"

14. Urban the Pope having been put under an arrest by the K. of Hungary revenges himself as soon as he had made his escape by causing 5 Cardinals of the Hungarian Party to be tied up in [illegible] of [illegible] into the Sea.

158 Rodolfo's pair of Stores which cost only 10 florins & annually produced 200.

162 The [illegible] of Milan [illegible] excellent Cook "whom he had sent to France [illegible] the art of [illegible] nice [illegible]"

174. A pious person [illegible] furiously against Adultery declared that he had much rather [illegible] the Sin of unchastity with 10 Virgins than with one married woman

410 [illegible] Dreams — [illegible] Shakespear

423 Poggio's narration of [illegible] is to be found in the [illegible] Ramusio [illegible] [illegible] of the ruins of [illegible] — in the Basil Ed. of his works [illegible] the whole [illegible] interesting [illegible] the Abate [illegible] 2° [illegible] 1723.

412 Splendid & venerable Character of Nicholas V Tchinder of the Vatican Library & one of the best of the Roman Pontiffs

THE

LIFE

38704

OF

POGGIO BRACCIOLINI.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM SHEPHERD.

LIVERPOOL,

PRINTED BY J. M'CREERY;

FOR T. CADELL, JUN. AND W. DAVIES, STRAND, LONDON.

1802.

PREFACE.

THE ſervices rendered to the cauſe of literature by Poggio Bracciolini, have been noticed with due applauſe by Mr. Roſcoe in his celebrated Life of Lorenzo de' Medici. From the peruſal of that elegant publication, I was led to imagine, that the hiſtory of Poggio muſt contain a rich fund of information reſpecting the revival of letters. A curſory examination of the Baſil edition of his works, convinced me that I was not miſtaken; and I felt a wiſh to direct the attention of the public to the merits of an author, whoſe productions had afforded me no ſmall degree of pleaſure. Being apprized that Monſieur L'Enfant had given an account of the life and writings of Poggio, in two 12mo. volumes, entitled "Poggiana," I at firſt bounded my views to a tranſlation of that work. Upon peruſing

it, however, I found it ſo ill arranged, and in many particulars ſo erroneous, that I was perſuaded it would be a much more pleaſant taſk to compoſe a new Life of Poggio, than to correct the miſtakes which deform the Poggiana. In this idea I was fully confirmed by the peruſal of Recanati's Oſservazioni Critiche, in which Monſieur L'Enfant is convicted of no leſs than one hundred and twenty-nine capital errors.

I next turned my thoughts to the tranſlation of the Life of Poggio, written by Recanati, and prefixed by him to his edition of Poggio's Hiſtory of Florence. But finding this biographical memoir, though ſcrupulouſly accurate, too conciſe to be generally intereſting, and totally deſtitute of thoſe minute particularities which alone can give a clear and correct idea of individual character, I was perſuaded that the labours of Recanati by no means ſuperſeded any further attempts to elucidate the hiſtory of Poggio. I therefore undertook the taſk of giving a detailed account of the life and writings of that eminent reviver of literature; and being convinced,

from

from a perusal of his epistolary correspondence, that his connexions with the most accomplished scholars of his age, would impose upon his biographer the duty of giving some account of his learned contemporaries, whilst his situation in the Roman chancery in some degree implicated him in the political changes, which, in his days, distracted Italy, I carefully examined such books as were likely to illustrate the literary, civil, and ecclesiastical history of the period of which I had to treat. From these books I have selected whatever appeared to be relevant to my subject; and I have also introduced into my narrative, such extracts from the writings of Poggio as tend to illustrate, not only his own character, but also that of the times in which he lived.

I now submit the result of my inquiries to the public inspection, not without experiencing considerable anxiety respecting the fate which awaits my labours; but at the same time, conscious that I have spared no pains in searching for information, and that I have in no instance wilfully deviated from the truth of history. The

number

number and minuteneſs of my references to authorities will indeed vouch for my induſtry, and for my willingneſs to facilitate that examination which may occaſionally convict me of error. For errors and inadvertencies I could plead an excuſe, which would perhaps tend to mitigate the ſeverity of criticiſm, namely, that the life of Poggio was written during the ſhort intervals of leiſure allowed by a laborious occupation. But of this excuſe I cannot conſcientiouſly avail myſelf; for I have long been perſuaded that the habits of induſtry, acquired by the recurrence of daily employment, are much more productive of that exertion of mind which is neceſsary to the ſucceſsful ſtudy of literary compoſition, than the dignified, but enervating leiſure of the dilettante.

CHAP. I.

BIRTH of Poggio—His education at Florence—John of Ravenna—Manuel Crysoloras—Poggio goes to Rome—Enters into the ſervice of Boniface IX—State of Italy—Schiſm of the Weſt—Urban VI—The Antipope Clement VII—Boniface IX—Diſtracted ſtate of Italy—The Antipope Benedict XIII—Wars in Italy—Letter of Poggio—Poggio's arrival in Rome—Innocent VII—Poggio introduces Leonardo Aretino into the pontifical chancery—Memoirs of Leonardo—His conteſt with Jacopo d'Angelo—Inſurrection in Rome—Gregory XII—Alexander V.—Diſtractions of the Pontificate—Poggio viſits Florence—John XXII.—Leonardo Aretino elected chancellor of Florence—His marriage, and letter to Poggio—Convocation of the council of Conſtance.

CHAP. I.

POGGIO,*(a)* the ſon of Guccio Bracciolini, was born in the year 1380,*(b)* at Terranuova, a ſmall town ſituated in the territory of the republic of Florence, not far from Arezzo. He derived his baptiſmal name from his grandfather,*(c)* concerning whoſe occupation and circumſtances, the ſcanty memorials of the times in which he lived, do not furniſh any ſatisfactory information.*(d)*

(a) Recanati Poggii Vita, p. 1. *Recanati Osservazioni, p.* 34.

(b) Elogi degli Uomini Illustri Toscani, tom. i. *p.* 270.

(c) Recanati Poggii Vita, p. 1.

(d) Recanati indeed, on the authority of a letter addreſsed by an unknown antiquary to Benedetto de' Bondelmonti, aſſerts, that the office of notary had been for ſome generations hereditary in the family of Poggio.

Recanati ut supr.

From his father, Poggio inherited no advantages of rank or fortune. Guccio Bracciolini, who exerciſed the office of notary, was once indeed poſſeſsed of conſiderable property; but being either by his own imprudence, or by misfortune, involved in difficulties, he had recourſe to the deſtructive aſſiſtance of an uſurer, by whoſe rapacious artifices, his ruin was ſpeedily completed, and he was compelled to fly from the purſuit of his creditors.*(a)*

But whatever might be the diſadvantages under which Poggio laboured, in conſequence of the embarraſſed ſtate of his father's fortune, in a literary point of view the circumſtances of his birth were ſingularly propitious. At the cloſe of the fourteenth century, the writings of Petrarca and Bocaccio were read with avidity, and the labours of thoſe eminent revivers of letters had excited throughout Italy the emulation of the learned. The day-ſtar had now pierced through the gloom of mental night, and the dawn of literature was gradually increasing in brilliancy. The city of Florence was, at this early period, diſtinguiſhed by the zeal with which its principal inhabitants cultivated and patronized the liberal arts. It was conſequently the favourite reſort of the ableſt ſcholars of the time, ſome of whom were induced by the offer of conſiderable ſalaries, to undertake the taſk of public

(a) See a fragment of a letter from Colucio Salutati to Pietro Turco. *Apud Mehi Vitam Ambroſii Traverſarii, fo.* ccclxxix, ccclxxx.

public inſtruction. In this celebrated ſchool, Poggio applied himſelf to the ſtudy of the Latin tongue, under the direction of Giovanni Malpaghino, more commonly known by the appellation of John of Ravenna. This eminent ſcholar had, for a period of nearly fifteen years, been honoured by the friendſhip, and benefited by the precepts of Petrarca, under whoſe auſpices he made conſiderable progreſs in the ſtudy of morals, hiſtory, and poetry. After the death of his illuſtrious patron, he delivered public lectures on polite literature, firſt at Venice, and afterwards at Florence. At the latter place, beſides Poggio, the following celebrated literary characters were formed by his inſtructions—Leonardo Aretino, Pallas Strozza, Roberto Ruffo, Paulo Vergerio the elder, Omnebuono Vicentino, Guarino Veroneſe, Carlo Aretino, Ambrogio Traverſari, and Franceſco Barbaro.*(a)*

It

(a) Giovanni, the ſon of Jacopo Malpaghino, was born at Ravenna. In his early youth he left his native city, and went to Venice, where he attended the lectures of Donato Albaſano, a celebrated grammarian. From the inſtructions of Donato he derived conſiderable advantage; but his connexion with that ſcholar was more eminently fortunate, as it introduced him to the acquaintance, and procured him the friendſhip of Petrarca, who took him into his family, and ſuperintended the proſecution of his ſtudies. In return for the kindneſs of his accompliſhed patron, Giovanni undertook the improving employment of tranſcribing his compoſitions—a taſk for which he was well qualified, as he had added to his other acquirements that of a beautiful hand writing. Petrarca in a letter to Giovanni Certaldo, which is preſerved in Mehus's life of Ambrogio Traverſari, mentions, with diſtinguiſhed applauſe, the induſtry, temperance, and prudence of his young ſcribe; and particularly commends the tenaciouſneſs of his memory, in proof of which, he informs his correſpondent, that Giovanni

It providentially happened, that when the human mind was, in various parts of Europe, rouſed from the lethargy by which it had been oppreſsed during the tedious courſe of many centuries, the troubled ſtate of the eaſtern empire, compelled many learned Greeks to quit their native country and fly into Italy. Theſe accompliſhed emigrants diffuſed, throughout the diſtricts in which they took refuge, the knowledge of the Grecian language, of that language, which, as Mr. Gibbon happily ſays, "gives a ſoul to the objects of ſenſe, and a body to "the abſtractions of philoſophy."*(a)* Fixing their reſidence in the Italian univerſities, they were hailed as the diſpenſers of ſcience, and the oracles of wiſdom. Their lectures were aſſiduouſly attended, and their inſtructions were imbibed with all the ardour of enthuſiaſm. In the liſt of theſe illuſtrious profeſsors, the name of Manuel Cryſoloras

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had, in eleven ſucceſſive days, qualified himſelf to repeat his twelve Bucolic poems. Perhaps the higheſt eulogium that can be pronounced upon Giovanni is this, that he continued to reſide in the family of Petrarca for the ſpace of fifteen years, at the end of which time, by the death of that elegant enthuſiaſt, he was deprived of an enlightened maſter and a zealous friend. On this event he went to Padua, where he for ſome time gained an honourable livelihood, by inſtructing youth in the principles of eloquence. In the year 1397, he received an invitation to undertake the office of public inſtructor, in the city of Florence. This invitation he accepted, and diſcharged the duties of his ſtation with great applauſe, during the courſe of at leaſt fifteen years. The time of his death is uncertain. *Mehi Vita Ambrosii Traversarii, p.* cccxlviii.—cccliii.—*Ejusdem præfatio ad Colucii Salutati Epistolas, p.* xli.

(a) Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. vi. *p.* 116, *octavo edit.*

Cryſoloras holds a diſtinguiſhed rank. Being deputed by Manuel Palæologus the emperor of the eaſt, to ſolicit the aſſiſtance of ſeveral of the European ſtates, in the laſt ſtruggles of the Byzantine empire againſt the growing power of the Turks, he found his commiſſion ſo irkſome and unprofitable, that he was induced to diveſt himſelf of the character of ambaſſador, and to aſſume the leſs oſtentatious, but perhaps more uſeful occupation, of reading lectures on the Grecian claſſics. With this view he repaired to Florence, to which city he was invited by the preſſing inſtances of two eminent ſcholars, Colucio Salutati, and Niccolo Niccoli.*(a)* He was welcomed to the Tuſcan capital by theſe reſpectable patrons, whoſe learning gave them the preeminence among a conſiderable body of ſtudents. Under the direction of Cryſoloras, Poggio applied himſelf with aſſiduity to the cultivation of Grecian literature.*(b)* It is impoſſible at this remote period accurately to trace the progreſs of his advancement in knowledge, but the diſplay of literary acquirements which procured him ſo much honour, in his maturer years, affords ample teſtimony of the enlightened and ſucceſsful induſtry with which he proſecuted his ſtudies in the Tuſcan univerſity.

When

(a) Poggii Opera. edit. Bas. p. 272.

(b) Elogi degli Uomini illustri Toscani tom. i. p. 271.

When he had attained a competent knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, Poggio quitted Florence and went to Rome,*(a)* where his literary reputation introduced him to the notice of Boniface IX. who took him into his ſervice, and promoted him to the office of writer of the apoſtolic letters. As no memorial of the times records the date of his arrival in Rome, the want of hiſtorical documents can only be ſupplied by conjecture. Now as Boniface IX. died in the year 1404, and as it is not probable that Poggio could have completed his ſtudies before 1401, at which time he was twenty-one years of age, the date of his arrival in the pontifical capital muſt be fixed ſomewhere between thoſe two periods. It is probable that he repaired to the Roman court in 1402, when negociations were carrying on between the pope and the Florentines, which would in all probability facilitate and encreaſe the intercourſe between Florence and the holy ſee.*(b)*

A. D. 1402. At the time of Poggio's admiſſion into the pontifical chancery, Italy was convulſed by war and faction. The kingdom of Naples was expoſed to the horrors of anarchy, conſequent upon a diſputed ſucceſſion to the throne. Many

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(a) Elogi degli Uomini Illustri Toscani, tom i, *p.* 271, *Orat. Funeb. Leon. Aret. p.* cxx.

(b) Mehus, in his life of Leonardo Aretino, ſays, that Poggio was appointed apoſtolic ſcribe A. D. 1403. *Mehi. Vita Leon. Bruni, p.* xxxi.

Many of the cities of Lombardy, now the unreſiſting prey of petty tyrants, now ſtruggling to throw off the yoke, were the miſerable theatres of diſcord and of bloodſhed. The ambition of the lord of Milan carried fire and ſword from the borders of Venice to the gates of Florence. The eccleſiaſtical ſtate was expoſed to the predatory incurſions of banditti; and the cities over which, as portions of the patrimony of St. Peter, the pope claimed the exerciſe of authority, took advantage of the weakneſs of the Roman court to free themſelves from its oppreſſion. At the ſame time, the luſtre of the pontificate was dimmed by the ſchiſm, which for the ſpace of more than twenty years, had divided the ſentiments, and impaired the ſpiritual allegiance of the Chriſtian community.

As this celebrated eccleſiaſtical feud, which is commonly diſtinguiſhed by the name of the Schiſm of the Weſt, commenced only two years before the birth of Poggio; as no fewer than ſix of his patrons were implicated in its progreſs and conſequences, and as it was terminated by the council of Conſtance, which aſſembly he attended in quality of ſecretary to John XXII. it will be neceſsary to enter a little at large into its hiſtory.

The joy experienced by the inhabitants of Rome, on the tranſlation of the papal court from Avignon to its ancient reſidence, by Gregory XI. was ſuddenly damped by the death of that pontiff, which event took place on

the 28th of March, 1378. The Romans were apprehenſive, that if the choice of the conclave ſhould fall upon a native of France, he would again remove the holy ſee beyond the Alps.*(a)* They ſighed for the reſtoration of that ſplendor, with which the pomp of the ſucceſſors of St. Peter had formerly graced their city. Their breasts glowed with indignation, when they ſaw the ſtates of the church, in conſequence of the abſence of its chief, ſucceſſively falling under the dominion of uſurpers. During the residence of the popes at Avignon, the devout pilgrimages, once ſo copious a ſource of gain to the inhabitants of the capital of Chriſtendom, had been ſuſpended; the tombs of the martyrs had been neglected, and the churches were faſt haſtening to decay. Dreading the renewal and the aggravation of theſe evils, the Roman clergy and populace aſsembled in a tumultuous manner, and ſignified to the cardinals, who happened to be at Rome at the time of the death of Gregory XI. their earneſt wiſhes, that they would appoint ſome illuſtrious Italian to fill the pontifical chair. Amidſt the clamours of the people, the conclave was held in the Vatican, under the protection of a guard of ſoldiers. This aſsembly was compoſed of thirteen French and four Italian cardinals. Notwithſtanding this preponderance of ultramontane ſuffrages, in conſequence, as Platina ſays, of a diſagreement among the French,*(b)* or more probably, as

was

(a) Platina Vite de' Pontefici, tom i, *p.* 368.

(b) Platina, tom i. *p.* 369.

was afterwards alledged by the Gallic eccleſiaſtics, in conſequence of the overawing influence of the Roman populace, the election was concluded in favour of a Neapolitan, Bartolomeo, archbiſhop of Bari, on whom the conclave conferred the name of Urban VI.*(a)* The French cardinals, after proteſting againſt his nomination to the papal chair, as an act in which they had been obliged to concur through a dread of rouſing the popular indignation, fled from the city. In the courſe of a little time, however, they returned to Rome, and made their peace with Urban by confirming his election, and paying him the cuſtomary homage. But this reconciliation was not laſting. The manners of Urban were haughty and ſtern, and his diſpoſition was ſevere and revengeful. Diſguſted by his pride, and dreading the effects of his reſentment, the foreign cardinals again withdrew, firſt to Anagni, and afterwards to Fondi, a town ſituated in the territories of Naples. Here, being emboldened by the protection of Joanna, queen of that country, they renewed their proteſt againſt the election of Urban, and proceeding to form a new conclave, they proclaimed the cardinal of Ginevra, under the name of Clement VII. the true ſucceſſor of St. Peter. This was the beginning of that ſchiſm, which for ſo long a ſpace of time perplexed the true believers, by the inexplicable phœnomenon of the coexiſtence of two ſupreme and infallible heads of the church, each

(a) The conclave gave a name to the new pontiff, becauſe he was abſent from Rome at the time of his election.

proſcribing his competitor, and fulminating the terrors of damnation againſt the adherents of his rival.

In this conteſt the Gallic cardinals did not reſtrict themſelves to the uſe of ſpiritual weapons. They aſſembled a body of mercenary ſoldiers, whom they employed in making an incurſion into the Roman territory. Theſe troops were at firſt ſucceſsful in their operations; but engaging the pontifical army near Marino, they were defeated with conſiderable loſs. *(a)*

The reſentful ſpirit of Urban, ſtimulated by the hoſtile conduct of the rebellious cardinals, prompted him to meditate a ſevere revenge. He inſtantly diſpatched an ambaſsador to Lodovico, king of Hungary, with inſtructions to proffer to that monarch his aſſiſtance in puniſhing the queen of Naples, for the murder of her huſband Andrew, brother to the Hungarian ſovereign, who had, with her concurrence, been put to death by Luigi, prince of Taranto. *(b)* Lodovico, who had long thirſted for vengeance, eagerly accepted the offers of Urban, and gave orders to his ſon, Carlo, to march with the Hungarian troops, which were then engaged in hoſtilities againſt the Venetians, and to co-operate with the pope in an attack upon

(a) *Platina, tom. i. p. 370.*

(b) *Voltaire, Eſſai ſur les Mœurs et l'Eſprit des Nations, chap. 69.*

upon the kingdom of Naples.*(a)* Carlo, after taking Arezzo, and obliging the Florentines to purchaſe peace at the price of forty thouſand crowns of gold, repaired to Rome, where he held a conference with Urban. Thence he directed his march to Naples, of which city he eaſily made himſelf maſter. Joanna, after ſuſtaining a ſhort ſiege in the Caſtello Nuovo, was taken priſoner, and, according to the directions of the inexorable king of Hungary, ſmothered between two mattraſſes.*(b)*

This vindictive deed being perpetrated, Urban repaired to Naples, and, according to the terms of an agreement which had been concluded before the departure of the prince of Hungary from Rome, he demanded, on behalf of his nephew, the poſſeſſion of the principality of Capua. On Carlo's refuſing to accede to this demand, Urban, with characteriſtic impetuoſity, had recourſe to threats, to which the Hungarian anſwered by putting the pontiff for ſome days under an arreſt. Urban, diſſembling his indignation, requeſted, and obtained of the prince, permiſſion to retire to Nocera for the benefit of his health. The firſt ſtep which he took on his arrival at that place, was to ſtrengthen its fortifications, and recruit its garriſon. He then proceeded to the nomination of new cardinals, and threw ſeven members of the ſa-

cred

to

(a) Platina, tom. i. p. 372.

(b) Poggius de Varietate Fortunæ, p. 56.

cred college into priſon, alledging, that at the inſtigation of the king of Hungary, and of his rival Clement, they had formed a conſpiracy againſt his life. Having cited Lodovico to appear and anſwer to the charges which he had to prefer againſt him, he proceeded to his trial. Lodovico treated the ſummons with contempt. Carlo indeed appeared as the repreſentative of his father; but he appeared at the head of a conſiderable army, with which he laid ſiege to Nocera. Urban, eſcaping from that city, embarked with his priſoners on board ſome Genoeſe gallies, which had been prepared to aid his flight. Exaſperated to the higheſt degree of cruelty, the fugitive pontiff vented his fury on the captive cardinals, five of whom he cauſed to be tied up in ſacks, and thrown into the ſea, (a).

On the death of Lodovico, and his ſon Carlo, who, ſoon after his acceſſion to the throne of Hungary, was murdered by aſſaſſins hired for that purpoſe by his queen, Urban endeavoured to make himſelf maſter of the kingdom of Naples. Being fruſtrated in this attempt, he returned to Rome, where he died on the 15th of October, 1389. We may eaſily credit the aſſertion of Platina, that "few were the perſons who wept at his death."

Poggio, in a letter to Angelotto, cardinal of St. Mark, aſcribes the violent conduct of Urban to a derangement of

(a) *Platina, tom.* i. *p.* 373, 374.

of intellect, conſequent upon his elevation to the pontifical dignity;*(a)* and he has recorded in his Facetiæ an anecdote, which may be quoted as proving the prevalence of an opinion that he was afflicted with inſanity.*(b)*

Urban was ſucceeded by Boniface IX. a Neapolitan, A. D. 1389. of the family of the Tomacelli, who was raiſed to the chair of St. Peter at the early age of thirty years.*(c)* The diſtracted ſtate of Italy required indeed the exertions of a pontiff endowed with the vigour and activity of the prime of life. That beautiful country was the devoted prey of war, rapine, and civil diſcord. The native country of Poggio did not eſcape the general calamity. Galeazzo, lord of Milan, having declared war againſt Florence and Bologna, ſent a powerful body of forces under the command of Giovanni Ubaldino and Giantedeſco Pietramalo, with orders to lay waſte the territories of thoſe ſtates. In this extremity, the Florentines diſpatched a conſiderable army, under the command of their

(a) Vide Poggii Epistolas lvii, *a Johanne Oliva Rhodigini vulgatas ad calcem librorum de Varietate Fortunæ, p.* 199.

(b) Alter Urbanus olim ſummum pontificem leviter perſtrinxit. Nam cum ille neſcio quid acrius a pontifice contenderet, "malo capite es" inquit Urbanus. Tum ille "hoc idem" inquit, "et de te vulgi dicunt homines pater "ſancte." *Poggii Opera, edit. Basil, p.* 428.

(c) Platina, tom. i. *p.* 376.

their general Auguto, to make a diverſion in the Milaneſe, and ſucceſsfully ſolicited the aſſiſtance of Stephen, duke of Bavaria, and of the count d'Armagnac. The former of theſe chieftains opened the campaign with brilliancy, by the conqueſt of Padua; but finding the Florentines remiſs in paying the money for which he had ſtipulated, as the reward of his ſervices, he returned in diſguſt into his own dominions. The count d'Armagnac, deſcending into Italy by the way of Turin, with the intention of co-operating with Auguto, who had advanced to Bergamo, was alſo ſucceſsful in his firſt operations. But as he was making a deſperate aſsault on the city of Aleſsandria, a detachment of the Milaneſe forces unexpectedly fell upon his rear. The French being thus ſurrounded, were inſtantly put to the rout; almoſt the whole of their army was cut to pieces; and the count himſelf, being mortally wounded, was carried a priſoner into the town, where he ſoon after expired. In theſe critical circumſtances, the Florentines were greatly indebted to the extraordinary military talents of Auguto, who with an inferior force, effected a retreat through the heart of the Milaneſe, and held in check the army of Galeazzo, which had made an irruption into the Tuſcan territories. Both parties being at length weary of a conteſt which was productive only of mutual injury, they liſtened to the paternal admonitions of Boniface, who interpoſed between them in the quality of mediator; and, under the auſpices of the pontiff and the duke of Genoa, a peace was concluded between

tween Galeazzo and the Florentines, on the baſis of mutual reſtitution.*(a)*

When will a ſufficient number of inſtances have been recorded by the pen of hiſtory, of nations harraſſing each other by the outrages of war, and after years of havock and bloodſhed, when exhauſted by exertions beyond their natural ſtrength, agreeing to forget the original ſubject of diſpute, and mutually to reſume the ſtation which they occupied at the commencement of the conteſt. "Were "ſubjects wiſe," what would be their reflections, when their rulers, after the moſt laviſh waſte of blood, coolly ſit down and propoſe to each other the *ſtatus quo ante bellum*. Happy would it be, could the *ſtatus quo* be extended to the widow and the orphan—to the thouſands and tens of thouſands, who, in conſequence of the hardſhips and accidents of war, are doomed to languiſh out the remnant of their lives in torment and decrepitude.

In the year 1393, the antipope Clement VII. dying at Avignon, the ſchiſmatic cardinals, ſtill perſiſting in their rebellion againſt the Italian pontiff, elected as the legitimate ſucceſſor of St. Peter, Pietro da Luna, who aſſumed the name of Benedict XIII.*(b)* A. D. 1393.

(a) Platina, tom. i. *p.* 376, 377. *Poggii Historia Florentina, lib.* iii.

(b) Platina, tom. i. *p.* 378.

For the ſpace of five years after the pacification of Genoa, Florence enjoyed the bleſsings of peace; but at the end of that period its tranquillity was again diſturbed by the ambition of Galeazzo, who had now obtained from the emperor Wenceſlaus, the title of duke of Milan. This turbulent chieftain, being encouraged by the death of Auguto,*(a)* the experienced commander of the Florentine

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(a) The Engliſh reader will probably be ſurpriſed to recognize in Giovanni Auguto, his countryman John Hawkewood. John was a ſoldier of fortune, and had been engaged in the war which Edward III. king of England, carried on with ſo much glory againſt France. On the concluſion of peace between thoſe two countries, he led into Italy a band of 3000 adventurers, of reſtleſs ſpirits, and approved courage, who had engaged to fight under his banners, in the ſervice of any ſtate which would give them a ſuitable remuneration for their ſervices. In the year 1363, this army of deſperadoes was hired by the republic of Piſa, and ſpread ruin and devaſtation through the territories of Florence, with which ſtate the Piſans were then at war. They afterwards entered into the ſervice of Bernabò Viſconti, lord of Milan, and being again oppoſed to the Florentines, they defeated the Tuſcan army, and made predatory incurſions to the very gates of Florence. Being defrauded by Bernabò of the remuneration which his ſervices merited, Hawkewood readily acceded to the terms propoſed to him by the cardinal of Berry, legate of pope Gregory XI. and heartily engaged on the ſide of the pontiff in hoſtilities againſt the lord of Milan. Having aſſiſted in the capture of nearly a hundred towns belonging to that prince, he had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing him reduced to the neceſſity of ſuing for peace. In the year 1375 he entered into the ſervice of the Florentines. In the courſe of a little time he was promoted to the chief command of the Tuſcan forces, in which capacity he merited and acquired the confidence of his employers, by the courage and ſkill with which he conducted the military operations of the Republic. He retained the office of Generaliſſimo of the Florentine army, till the time of his death, which event took place in the latter end of the year 1393. The gratitude of the Florentines honoured him with a magnificent funeral, and

rentine forces, ſent into Tuſcany a ſtrong body of troops, which made incurſions to the very gates of the capital. Ruin and devaſtation attended the progreſs of the Milaneſe forces, who laid waſte the country with fire and ſword, and led a great number of the inhabitants into captivity. The following letter, addreſsed on a ſimilar occaſion by Poggio to the chancellor of Siena, is at once

 a document

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his fame was perpetuated by an equeſtrian ſtatue, erected to his memory at the public expenſe.

Poggii Historia, Florentina, p. 29, 41, 46. 122. 123. See particularly note (x) p. 29, which settles the English appellation of Auguto.

In a volume of portraits of illuſtrious men, engraven on wood, entitled Muſæi Joviani Imagines, and printed at Baſil, An. 1577, there is a portrait of Auguto, who is there denominated IOANNES AVCVTHVS. BRITAN. Underneath this portrait is printed the following inscription.

" Anglorum egreſſus patriis Aucuthus ab oris,
" Italiæ primum climata lætus adit,
" Militiæ fuerat quascunque edoctus et artes,
" Auſoniæ exeruit non ſemel ipſe plagæ,
" Ut donaretur ſtatuâ defunctus equestri,
" Debita nam virtus præmia ſemper habet."

Paulus Jovius, in his *Elogia Virorum illustrium, p.* 105, 106, gives a long account of Auguto, who, he aſſerts, came into Italy in the ſuite of the duke of Clarence, when that prince viſited Milan, where he married the daughter of Galeazzo Viſconti.

Holingſhed, in his Chronicle, has recorded the actions of Hawkewood in the following terms. " And that valiant knight, Sir John Hawkewood, whoſe " fame in the parts of Italie ſhall remain for ever, where, as their hiſtories make

a document of the miſery to which the ſmall ſtates of Italy were at this time expoſed in conſequence of the waſteful irruptions of their enemies, and a record of the benevolent diſpoſitions of the writer's heart.

" I could have wiſhed that our correſpondence had " commenced on other grounds than the calamity of a " man for whom I have a great regard, and who has " been

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" mention, he grew to ſuch eſtimation for his valiant atchieved enterprizes, that " happie might that prince or commonwealth accompt themſelves that might " have his ſervice; and ſo living there in ſuch reputation, ſometimes he ſerved " the Pope, ſometimes the Lords of Millane, now this prince or commonwealth, " now that, and otherwhiles none at all, but taking one towne or other, would " keep the ſame till ſome liking enterteinment were offered, and then would he " ſell ſuch a towne, where he had thus remained, to them that would give him " for it according to his mind. Barnabe, Lord of Millane, gave unto him one " of his baſe daughters in marriage, with an honourable portion for her dower.

" This man was borne in Eſſex (as ſome write,) who at the firſt became a " tailor in London, and afterwards going to the warres in France, ſerved in the " roome of an archer, but at length he became a Capteine and leader of men of " war, highlie commended and liked of amongſt the ſouldiers, inſomuch that " when by the peace concluded at Bretignie, in the yeare 1360, great numbers " of ſoldiers were diſcharged out of wages, they got themſelves together in com- " panies, and without commandment of any prince, by whoſe authoritie they " might make warre, they fell to of themſelves, and ſore harried and ſpoiled di- " verſe countries in the realm of France, as partlie yee have heard, amongſt " whome this Sir John Hawkewood was one of the principall capteines, and at " length went into Italie to ſerve the Marquis of Montferrato, againſt the Duke " of Millane, although I remember that ſome write how he came into that " countrie with the Duke of Clarence, but I thinke the former report to be " true; but it may well be that he was readie to attend the ſaid Duke at his " comming into Italie "—*Holingshed's Chronicle, vol.* ii. *p.* 413.

" been taken captive, together with his wife and chil-
" dren, whilst he was engaged in the cultivation of my
" eſtate. I am informed that he and one of his ſons
" are now languiſhing in the priſons of Siena. Ano-
" ther of his children, a boy of about five years of age
" is miſsing, and it is not known whether he is dead
" or alive. What can exceed the misery of this lamen-
" table deſtiny? I wiſh theſe diſtreſses might fall upon
" the heads of their original authors: but alas! the
" wretched ruſtics pay the forfeit of the crimes of
" others. When I reflect on the ſituation of thoſe on
" whoſe behalf I now intercede with you, my writing
" is interrupted by my tears. For I cannot help con-
" templating in the eye of imagination the woe-worn
" aſpect of the father—the pallid countenance of the
" mother—the exquiſite grief of the unhappy ſon. They
" have loſt every thing except their life, which is bereft
" of all its comforts. For the father, the captors de-
" mand, by way of ranſom, ten, for the ſon, forty
" florins. Theſe ſums it is impoſsible for them to raiſe,
" as they have been deprived of their all by the rapacity
" of the ſoldiers, and if they do not meet with aſsis-
" tance from the well-diſpoſed, they muſt end their days
" in captivity. I take the liberty of earneſtly preſsing
" this caſe upon your conſideration, and I entreat you to
" uſe your utmoſt exertions to redeem theſe unfortunate
" people on the loweſt terms poſsible. If you have any
" regard for my entreaties, or if you feel that affection
" which is due from one friend to another, I beſeech you

" with

" with all poſsible importunity to undertake the care of " this wretched family, and ſave them from the miſery " of periſhing in priſon. This you may effect by exert- " ing your intereſt to get their ranſom fixed at a low " rate. Whatever muſt be paid on this account, muſt " be advanced by me. I truſt my friend Pietro will, if " it be neceſsary, aſſiſt you in this affair. I muſt re- " queſt you to give me an anſwer informing me what " you can do, or rather what you have done, to ſerve me " in this matter. I ſay what you have done, for I know " you are able, and I truſt you are willing to aſsiſt me. " But I muſt haſten to cloſe my letter, leſt the miſery " of theſe unhappy people should be prolonged by my " delay." *(a)*.

The uneaſineſs which the Florentines experienced, in conſequence of the hoſtile incurſions of Galeazzo's forces, was conſiderably augmented by the acceſſion of territory and of ſtrength, which that enterpriſing warrior at this time obtained by the acquiſition of the cities of Bologna, Lucca and Perugia. This laſt place having thrown off its allegiance to the pope, had ſheltered itſelf from his indignation under the protection of the duke of Milan. *(b)*

The year of the jubilee was now approaching, and the

(a) Poggii Opera, edit. Basil, p. 311.

(b) Platina, tom i, *p.* 378.

the Romans, ever delighted with the frivolity of magnificent ſpectacles, ſent a deputation to Boniface, who had ſtudiouſly withdrawn from Rome, requeſting him to honour his capital with his preſence. With this requeſt, Boniface heſitated to comply, alledging, as the reaſon of his heſitation, that the choice of magiſtrates, which the Roman people had lately made, was by no means pleaſing to him. Unwilling to forego the amuſements and profits of the approaching feſtival, the compliant citizens of Rome gratified the pontiff with the ſelection of the principal officers of ſtate, and moreover, ſupplied him with a conſiderable ſum of money. Boniface, in return for theſe acts of ſubmiſſion, vouchſafed to make his public entry into Rome; and employed the money which he had received, as the price of his condeſcenſion, in fortifying the Mole of Adrian, in modern times better known by the name of the caſtle of St. Angelo, and other poſts, which gave him the command of the city. Thus had the Romans the ſatisfaction of celebrating the jubilee with extraordinary pomp, at the expenſe of the remnant of their liberty.*(a)*

In the mean time the Florentines, being hard preſsed by the duke of Milan, derived a ray of hope from the aſſiſtance of the newly elected emperor Robert, duke of Bavaria, who promiſed to come to their aid, with a powerful body of troops. The joy which they felt on this occaſion, A. D. 1409.

(a) *Platina, tom i, p 379.*

occaſion, was however but of ſhort continuance; for ſoon after his entrance into Italy, the emperor was totally defeated by the duke of Milan, and the remnant of his army being driven over the mountains, was obliged to take ſhelter in the city of Trent. By the retreat of the imperial troops, the Florentines were reduced to the utmoſt extremity. Abandoned by their allies, and expoſed to the inroads of their neighbours, they implored the aſſiſtance of Boniface. The pontiff, who felt deep reſentment againſt Galeazzo on account of his ſeizure of ſeveral cities in the eccleſiaſtical ſtate, readily entered into the views of the Florentines, and without heſitation, concluded a treaty, by which he engaged to bring into the field, an army of five thouſand men, which was to cooperate with the Tuſcan forces. But ſoon after the commencement of the campaign, the Florentines were happily relieved from their anxiety, by the death of their inveterate enemy Galeazzo, whoſe career of conqueſt was terminated by a fever, of which he died at Marignano,*(a)* on the third of September, 1402. Soon after the death

(a) Marignano was a caſtle, or country reſidence, to which Galeazzo had retired to avoid the plague, which had made its appearance in Milan. Poggio informs us in his hiſtory of Florence, that the day and hour of his departure from his capital was fixed by his aſtrologers, whom he was accuſtomed to conſult in all caſes of conſequence. According to the obſervations of theſe ſoothſayers, ſo evidently had the ſtars determined the proper ſeaſon for his journey, and ſo auſpicious was the appearance of the heavens, that they boldly predicted that their illuſtrious patron would return, graced with the title of King of Italy. Poggio alſo aſſerts, that it was generally believed, that the death of Galeazzo was portended by a comet, which appeared in the month of March preceding that event.

death of this powerful prince, many cities, of which he had at different times forcibly taken poſſeſſion, were ſeized by various petty tyrants; who took advantage of the

D odium

It ſhould ſeem that the aſtrologers of the lord of Milan, had forgotten to take this comet into their calculations.

Poggio's partiality to his native country, did not render him blind to the merits of Galeazzo, on whom he beſtows the praiſe due to his liberality, magnanimity, and noble manners. He alſo highly commends him for his patronage, of literature and of learned men. The following anecdote however, which is recorded in Poggio's Facetiæ, proves, that the luſtre of Galeazzo's good qualities was tarniſhed by his exceſſive indulgence in the pleaſures of the table.—

" Pope Martin V. had employed Antonio Luſco in the compoſition of ſome " letters, which after he had peruſed them, the pontiff ordered him to ſubmit to " the examination of a friend of mine, in whoſe judgment he had great confi- " dence. This perſon, who was a little diſordered with wine at the time when " the letters were communicated to him, totally diſapproved of them, and or- " dered Luſco to rewrite them. Then Antonio ſaid to Bartolomeo de' Bardi, " who happened to be preſent, I will do with my letters as the tailor did with " Giovanni Galeazzo's waiſtcoat. Upon Bartolomeo's aſking what that was, " he replied, Giovanni Galeazzo was a very corpulent man, and was in the ha- " bit of eating and drinking immoderately at supper. As he was retiring to reſt " after one of theſe copious repaſts, he ſent for his tailor, and ſharply reproved " him for making his waiſtcoat too tight, and ordered him to widen it. I will " take care ſaid the tailor to execute your highneſses orders, and I truſt that to- " morrow it will fit you to your ſatisfaction. He then took the garment in queſ- " tion, and without making the leaſt alteration in it, hung it on a nail. Being " aſked why he did not make the waiſtcoat wider, according to the orders which " he had received, he ſaid, to-morrow when the prince has digeſted his ſupper, " it will be found large enough. He accordingly carried it back in the morn- " ing, when Galeazzo having put it on, ſaid, Aye, now it will do—it fits per- " fectly eaſy."

Platina, tom i. *p.* 379. 380. *Poggii Historia, Florentina, p.* 153.

odium excited by the vices of his ſon and ſucceſſor Giovanni Maria, and Boniface availed himſelf of the general confuſion to reduce Bologna and Perugia to their ancient allegiance to the papal ſee. *(a)*

It has been already obſerved, that the date of Poggio's arrival in Rome, and of his induction into the office of apoſtolic ſcribe, may be reaſonably fixed at the period of the treaty concluded between Boniface and the Florentine republic, with the view of curbing the power of the duke of Milan. He was then in the twenty-ſecond year of his age. At this dangerous ſeaſon, though animated

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(a) During the ſtate of anarchy into which the Milaneſe territories fell, in conſequence of the folly and wickedneſs of the ſucceſſor of Galeazzo, Como and Piacenza became the prey of the ſoldiers, Vercelli and Novara were ſeized by the Marquis of Montferat. Pandolfo Malateſta made himſelf maſter of Breſcia; Ottobuono III. took poſſeſſion of Piacenza, Parma, and Reggio. Pavia, Aleſſandria, Tortona, and ſeveral other towns, ſubmitted to the authority of Facino Cane. This laſt chieftain was the captain of one of thoſe bands of adventurers, who at this time ſubſiſted upon the wages which they received for their military ſervices, and upon the plunder of the rich towns and fertile provinces of Italy. The following anecdote may ſerve to give the reader an idea of the inſolent rapacity with which theſe diſciplined robbers carried on their depredations.—

" A perſon once complained to Facino Cane, that he had been robbed of his " cloak by one of that captain's ſoldiers. Facino, obſerving that the complainant " was clad in a good waiſtcoat, aſked him whether he wore that at the time " when he was robbed. Being anſwered in the affirmative, Go ſays he—the " man who robbed you cannot be one of my ſoldiers, for none of my followers " would have left you ſo good a waiſtcoat."

Poggii Hist. Flor. p. 159. 160.—*Opera. p.* 427.

mated with a lively fancy, and ſtimulated by an ardent conſtitution, he was not allured into diſſipation, by the temptations of a corrupt and luxurious court. We learn indeed from the introductory converſation of his dialogue on avarice, that the appointments of the pontifical ſecretaries were not very ſplendid. Antonio Luſco, one of the interlocutors in that dialogue, is there repreſented as declaring, that their income was ſcarcely ſufficient to maintain the dignity of their office.*(a)* It is probable therefore, that the ſcantineſs of Poggio's revenues had no unfavourable influence on his moral conduct and his ſtudies. In the preface to his *Hiſtoria diſceptativa convivialis*, he acknowledges, that he frequently had recourſe to literary purſuits, in order to beguile the anxiety which he experienced in conſequence of the narrowneſs of his circumſtances.*(b)* Poverty is not unfrequently the parent

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(a) "Mallem tamen dici adverſus avaritiam, cum verear ne ſit neceſſe nos "fieri avaros, ob tenuitatem lucri quo vix poſſumus tueri officii noſtri digni-"tatem."

Poggii Opera, edit. Basil. p. 5.

(b) "Ego ſane quò me ex eorum vulgo eximerem de quorum ocio parum "conſtat, nonnulla hac tenus conſcripsi; quæ jam inter multos diffuſa longiorem "paulo, mihi, poſt obitum, vitam allatura videantur. Idque eò feci libentius, "quo facilius fugerem eas moleſtias, quibus hæc fragilis atque imbecilla ætas "plena eſt. Hæc enim ſcribendi exercitatio, multum mihi contulit ad tempo-"rum injurias perferendas. Non enim non potui angianimo et dolere aliquan-"do, cum viderem me natu majorem, ita adhuc tenui eſſe cenſu, ut cogerer "quæſtui potius operam quam ingenio dare."

Poggii Opera, p. 32.

rent of knowledge, and the ſtern, but ſalutary guardian of virtue. Whatever might be the cauſe, certain it is, that Poggio diligently devoted his leiſure hours to ſtudy, and cultivated the acquaintance of thoſe whoſe converſation might tend to the improvement of his mind. As literary purſuits had at this æra acquired the currency of faſhion, the character of the ſcholar was frequently found united with that of the man of the world. To this circumſtance we may aſcribe the union of learning, politeneſs, and knowledge of the human heart, which ſhines ſo conſpicuouſly in the writings of Poggio.

On the 1ſt of October, 1404, Poggio ſuſtained a conſiderable loſs by the death of his patron Boniface IX. "Nothing would have been wanting," ſays Platina, "to complete the glory of this pontiff, had he not tar-"niſhed the luſtre of his fame by his exceſsive partiality "towards his relations. Theſe flocked in crowds to "Rome; and the numerous acts of ſimony of which "they were guilty, greatly impaired the authority of "the keys."*(a)*

On

(a) Platina, tom. i. *p.* 380, 381. The following anecdote, inſerted by Poggio in his Facetiæ, is at once a record of this partiality, and a curious ſpecimen of the Italian wit of the fourteenth century.—

"Bonifacius pontifex nonus, natione fuit Neapolitanus ex familiâ Tomacel-"lorum. Appellantur autem vulgari ſermone Tomacelli cibus factus ex jecore "ſuillo admodum contrito atque in modum pili involuto interiore pinguedine "porci. Contulit Bonifacius ſe Perufiam ſecundo ſui pontificatûs anno. Ade-

On the death of Boniface, Coſmo, cardinal of Santa Croce, was elected to the pontificate, and aſsumed the name of Innocent VII. The new pontiff was by no means inſenſible of the merits of Poggio, whom he continued in the office to which he had been promoted by the favor of Boniface. He appears indeed to have treated him with particular kindneſs and reſpect. Poggio availed himſelf of his intereſt with Innocent, to teſtify the ſincerity of his friendſhip for Leonardo Aretino, who during his reſidence at Florence, had been the aſsociate of his ſtudies, and the companion of his feſtive hours. Leonardo, whoſe paternal appellation was Bruni, derived the name of Aretino from Arezzo, in which city he was born in the year 1370. His parents, though not graced by the honours of nobility, held a reſpectable rank in ſociety, and were ſufficiently wealthy to be enabled to beſtow on their ſon a good education.*(a)* In his early youth, Leonardo was incited to a love of letters by A. D. 1404.

"rant autem ſecum fratres et affines ex eâ domo permulti, qui ad eum (ut fit) "conſuixerant, honorum ac lucri cupiditate. Ingreſſo Bonifacio urbem ſeque- "batur turba primorum, inter quos fratres erant et cæteri ex ea familiâ. Qui- "dam cupidiores noſcendorum hominum quærebant quinam eſsent qui ſeque- "rentur. Dicebat unus item alter, hic eſt Andreas Tomacellus, deinde hic "Johannes Tomacellus, tum plures deinde Tomacellos nominatim recenſendo. "Tum quidam facetus Hohe! permagnum nempe fuit jecur iſtud, inquit, ex "quo tot Tomacelli prodierunt et tam ingentes.

Poggii Opera, p. 431.

(a) Mehi Vita Leonardi Bruni, p. xxiii. xxv.

by an extraordinary accident. A body of French troops, who were marching to Naples to aſſiſt Louis duke of Anjou in maintaining his claim to the ſovereignty of that kingdom, at the ſolicitation of the partizans of a faction which had been baniſhed from Arezzo, made an unexpected attack upon that city; and after committing a great ſlaughter, carried many of the inhabitants into captivity; and among the reſt, the family of Bruni. Leonardo being confined in a chamber in which was hung a portrait of Petrarca, by daily contemplating the lineaments of that illuſtrious ſcholar, conceived ſo ſtrong a deſire to ſignalize himſelf by literary acquirements, that immediately upon his enlargement he repaired to Florence, where he proſecuted his ſtudies with unremitting diligence, under the direction of John of Ravenna and Manuel Cryſoloras. *(a)* During his reſidence at Florence, he contracted a ſtrict intimacy with Poggio. This intimacy was not interrupted by the ſeparation of the two friends, which took place upon the removal of the latter to Rome. On the contrary, Poggio being informed by Leonardo, that he wiſhed to procure a preſentation to ſome place of honour and emolument in the Roman chancery, took every opportunity of commending his virtues, and of bringing his talents into public notice, by communicating his letters to the literary characters who frequented

(a) Janotii Manetti, Oratio Funebris apud Mehi, edit. Epist. Leonardi Aretini, tom. i. *p.* xcii. xciii.

frequented the pontifical court.*(a)* In conſequence of Poggio's addreſs, the fame of Leonardo reached the ears of Innocent, who was induced, by his extraordinary reputation, to invite him to Rome, at which city he arrived, March 24, 1405. On this occaſion the intereſt of Leonardo was powerfully promoted by a letter addreſsed to Innocent, by Coluccio Salutati,*(b)* the chancellor of the city

(a) Mehi Vita, Leon. Aret. p. xxxi.

(b) Coluccio Salutati was born in the obſcure town of Stignano, about the year 1330. It appears from a letter which he wrote to Bernardo di Moglo, that he was deſtitute of the advantages of early education, and that he did not apply himſelf to the cultivation of polite literature, till he was arrived at man's eſtate, and that he then began his grammatical ſtudies without the aid of a maſter. When he deemed himſelf properly prepared to extend his literary career, he went to Bologna, where he attended the public lectures of Giovanni di Moglo, the father of the abovementioned Bernardo. In compliance with the advice of his relations and friends, he qualified himſelf for the profeſſion of a notary: but when he had acquired a ſufficient knowledge of legal practice, he devoted himſelf to the Muſes, and compoſed ſeveral poems. In the forty-fifth year of his age, he was elected chancellor of the city of Florence, which office he held during the remainder of his life. He died on the fourth of May 1406, and his remains, after having been decorated with a crown of laurel, were interred with extraordinary pomp, in the church of Santa Maria del Fiore. It was a ſubject of great regret to Leonardo Aretino, that ſoon after his arrival in Rome, ſome unfortunate miſunderſtanding deprived him of the affectionate regard of Coluccio, and that the death of his veteran friend prevented him from effecting a reconciliation, which he appears to have deſired with all the earneſtneſs of an ingenuous mind.

Coluccio was the author of the following works, M.S. copies of moſt of which are preſerved in the Laurentian library. 1 De Fato et Fortunâ. 2 De ſæculo et religione. 3 De nobilitate legum et medicinæ. 4 Tractatus de Tyranno. 5 Tractatus quod medici eloquentiæ ſtudeant et de Verecundiâ an ſit virtus aut vitium. 6 De laboribus Herculis. 7 Hiſtoria de caſu Hominis. 8 De

city of Florence, in which he detailed the merits of the young candidate in the moſt flattering terms. The reception which Leonardo met with on his firſt preſentation at the pontifical court, though in ſome reſpects flattering, was on the whole inauſpicious. Innocent obſerved to him in the preſence of his courtiers, that he ſeemed to be in every other reſpect well qualified for the place to which he aſpired; but that an office of great truſt required more diſcretion than could be expected from his early years. This obſervation ſtimulated Jacopo d'Angelo, a ſcholar of conſiderable reputation who had formerly been a rival of Leonardo in the Florentine univerſity, to offer himſelf as a candidate for the office in queſtion. The age of Jacopo was more mature than that of Leonardo, and a reſidence of four years in the pontifical court, ſeemed to give a decided ſuperiority to his claims over thoſe of the ſtranger.*(a)* Poggio sympathized

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arte diſtandi. 9 Certamen Fortunæ. 10 Declamationes. 11 Invectiva in Antonium Luſcum. 12 Phyllidis querimoniæ. 13 Eclogæ viii. 14 Carmina ad Jacobum Allegrettum. 15 Sonetti, and laſtly, various Epiſtles, a collection of which was publiſhed by Mehus in one volume, ſmall Quarto, printed at Florence, A D. 1741.

We may judge of the zeal which Coluccio manifeſted for the promotion of literature by the extent of his library, which conſiſted of eight hundred volumes —a magnificent collection in thoſe early times, when good M.S.S. were very ſcarce, and conſequently very coſtly.—*Colucii Vita à Philippo Villani, apud Mehi editionem Epistolarum Lini Colucii Pierii Salutati—Leonardi Aretini Epistolæ, lib.* i. *ep.* x. xii.

(a) Leonardi Aretini Epist. l i. *ep.* i.

pathized in the diſappointment and anxiety of his friend. Fortunately however for Leonardo, Innocent having at this time received certain letters from the duke of Berry, determined to aſsign to each of the competitors, the taſk of drawing up an anſwer to them. The compoſitions of the two candidates being compared, the prize was unanimouſly adjudged to Leonardo, who was in conſequence of this deciſion, inſtantly advanced to the dignity of apoſtolic ſcribe. This tranſaction was the means of cementing the friendſhip of Poggio and Leonardo, which endured without interruption till their union was ſevered by death.*(a)*

Before his acceſsion to the chair of St. Peter, Innocent was accuſtomed to blame the negligence and timidity of the Italian pontiffs; and to attribute to their incapacity

(a) By gaining the victory in this conteſt, Leonardo conſiderably encreaſed his reputation, as his competitor was a man of very reſpectable talents. Jacopo d'Angelo was a native of Scarparia, and ſtudied the Latin tongue under the auſpices of John of Ravenna. Underſtanding that Demetrius Cydonius and Manuel Cryſoloras had undertaken to give public lectures on the Grecian claſsics in the city of Venice, he immediately repaired thither for the purpoſe of availing himſelf of their inſtructions. So great was his zeal in the cauſe of literature, that he accompanied Cryſoloras to Conſtantinople, with a view of collecting manuſcripts, and of attaining a more accurate and extenſive acquaintance with the Greek language. He tranſlated into Latin Ptolomey's Coſmographia, and alſo Plutarch's lives of Brutus and Pompey. His verſion of the Coſmographia he dedicated to Alexander V. Contemporary ſcholars have given ample teſtimonies to his literary abilities, but his ſtudies were abruptly terminated by an early death. *Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p.* xvi. cclvi.—*Ejuſdem Vita Leonardi Bruni, p.* xxxii.—*Facius de viris illuſtribus, p.* 9.

capacity the continuance of the ſchiſm which gave ſuch occaſion of triumph to the enemies of the true faith. But when he was inveſted with the pontifical purple, he was convinced by mortifying experience, that it was much eaſier to find fault with the conduct of his predeceſsors, than to redreſs the grievances of Italy, and to
A. D. 1405. reſtore the peace of the church. He found himſelf indeed obliged to exert all his power, to repreſs the ſpirit of liberty which prompted the Roman people to demand the reſtitution of the capitol, the caſtle of St. Angelo, and of the other places of ſtrength which had been wreſted from them by the policy of his predeceſsor. The animoſity excited in the breaſts of the populace, by the refuſal of Innocent to accede to theſe demands, was exaſperated to the higheſt degree, by the culpable impetuoſity of his nephew Lodovico, who attacking a deputation of the citizens, who had waited on the pontiff with a view of compoſing the difference which ſubſiſted between him and the people; had ſeized eleven of their number, and put them to death. Two of theſe were members of the council of ſeven, which preſided over the city, and the remaining nine were citizens of illuſtrious rank. Irritated by this act of cruel treachery, the populace flew to arms, and revenged the death of their chiefs by the ſlaughter of ſeveral of the ſervants of the pontiff. Innocent, who was unconſcious of the treachery of his nephew, was totally unprepared to reſiſt the fury of the multitude. The pontifical reſidence was indeed ſtrongly fortified; but it was not furniſhed with

ſufficient

ſufficient proviſions to be enabled to ſtand a ſiege; and the troops of Ladiſlaus king of Hungary, were ſaid to be haſtening to the aſsiſtance of the inſurgents. In this extremity, Innocent determined to ſeek his ſafety in flight. He accordingly left the palace, under the eſcort of a ſufficient guard, at two o'clock in the afternoon of the ſixth of Auguſt, and after a haſty march of two days, in the courſe of which ſeveral of his attendants died of fatigue, arrived at Viterbo.*(a)* Moſt of his ſervants, and among the reſt Poggio and Leonardo, the latter of whom narrowly eſcaped falling a victim to the indiſcriminate rage of the inſurgents, were the companions of his flight.*(b)*

The Roman patriots were now maſters of almoſt every part of the city. They were however ſoon diſpirited, when they ſaw their territory laid waſte by the pontifical troops, and agreed to terms of pacification with Innocent, who returned in triumph to his capital, towards the latter end of March, 1406.*(c)* The pontiff did not long enjoy this favourable reverſe of fortune, A. D. 1406.

(a) See an old diary of Gentile d' Urbino, *apud Muratorii Rer. Italic. Scriptor. tom.* vi. *p.* 844.

(b) Leonardi Aretini Epistolæ, l. i. *ep.* v.

(c) Leonardi Aretini Epistolæ, l. i. *ep.* x.

as he died on the ſixth of November, of the ſame year.(a)

When the intelligence of the death of Innocent reached France, the dukes of Berry, of Burgundy, and Orleans, who, in the quality of regents, adminiſtered the affairs of that kingdom during the mental indiſpoſition of Charles VI. repaired to Avignon, and conjuring Benedict XIII. to concur in putting an end to a ſchiſm which had been the ſource of ſo much ſcandal and calamity, propoſed, that he ſhould voluntarily diveſt himſelf of the pontificate. With a view of ſoftening the harſhneſs of this propoſal, they engaged, that whoſoever ſhould be elected at Rome as ſucceſsor to Innocent, ſhould be obliged to take the ſame ſtep. The antichriſtian competition being thus terminated, it was to be hoped, they ſaid, that the aſſembled cardinals would agree in the election of a pontiff, who would be univerſally acknowledged as the legitimate head of the church. Invitations to reſign dignity, ſplendor, and power, are ſeldom received with complacence. Benedict made many general proteſtations of his zeal for the welfare of the church, but peremptorily refuſed to quit the pontifical chair. Fearing that the regents would attempt to enforce their propoſitions by arms, he ſtrengthened the fortifications of Avignon, in which city he was in a manner beſieged for the

(a) *Platina, tom* i. *p.* 383. 384.

the ſpace of ſome months. Being at length reduced to extremities, he embarked on the Rhone, and proceeding down that river to the Mediterranean, he fled into Spain, where he found a refuge from the power of his enemies in his native province of Catalonia.*(a)*

In the mean time, each of the cardinals who happened to be at Rome, at the time of the death of Innocent VII. took a ſolemn oath, that if, in the enſuing election of a ſovereign pontiff, the choice of the conclave ſhould happen to fall upon himſelf, he would reſign the pontificate, provided Benedict would follow his example.

This arrangement was propoſed in order to appeaſe the mutual jealouſy of the French and Italian cardinals, as neither of theſe ſubdiviſions of the eccleſiaſtical ſenate, would conſent to ſacrifice their repreſentative without the concurrence of their antagoniſts in a ſimilar meaſure. Theſe preliminaries being adjuſted, on the 30th of November, the conclave proceeded to fill the vacant chair, by the election of Angelo Corraro, cardinal of St. Mark, who on his advancement to the pontifical dignity, adopted the name of Gregory XII.*(b)*

Though the new pontiff had, immediately after his election,

(a) Platina, tom. i. *p.* 385. 386.

(b) Leonardi Aretini Epiſtolæ, l. ii. *ep.* iii.

election, ſubſcribed a ratification of the oath which bound him to abdicate his newly acquired honours; yet upon frivolous pretexts, he from time to time deferred the fulfilment of this ſacred engagement. Benedict his competitor, having repaired to Savona, and afterwards to Porto Venere, with a view, as he aſserted, of ſettling the peace of the church, by an amicable conference with Gregory; the latter inſiſted upon it, that they ſhould meet in ſome inland town, where they might jointly comply with the requiſition of the cardinals. Benedict on the contrary aſserting, that he could not deem himſelf ſafe in the interior of Italy, demanded that Gregory ſhould for that purpoſe, meet him in ſome ſea-port. With this propoſal, Gregory, on pretence of apprehended danger to his perſon, refuſed to comply. Thus as Leonardo Aretino humorouſly obſerves, "The one, like "an aquatic animal, was afraid of truſting himſelf on "dry land; and the other, like a terreſtrial animal, had "an equal dread of the water."*(a)* Scandalized by the

(a) Leonardi Aretini Epiſtolæ, l. ii. *ep.* xxi. The cardinal of Bourdeaux, converſing with Poggio on the tardineſs of Gregory in fulfilling his engagement, obſerved, that the conduct of his holineſs reminded him of the wicked wit of the humouriſt, who impoſed upon the credulity of the populace of Bologna. On Poggio's aſking him to what circumſtance he alluded, he related the following anecdote, which may bear a compariſon with the ſtory of the famous bottle-conjurer. "There was lately at Bologna," ſaid the cardinal, "a wag, who proclaimed by public advertiſement, that on a certain "day he would fly from the top of a tower, ſituated about a mile from the city, "near St. Raphael's bridge. On the day appointed, almoſt all the Bologneſe

the duplicity of the rival pontiffs, and alarmed by the violence of Gregory, the cardinals quitted Lucca, to which city they had accompanied him in hopes that he would adopt the requiſite ſteps to put an end to the ſchiſm, and aſſembled at Piſa. Here, conſtituting themſelves a council of the church, they depoſed both Gregory and Benedict, ſubſtituting in their place, Pietro Filardo, a native of Candia, who aſſumed the appellation of Alexander V.*(a)*

During theſe diſtractions of the Roman court, the officers of the pontifical houſehold, according to their various views of duty, or conſiderations of intereſt, purſued different plans of conduct. Many of them with prudent foreſight, deſerting the falling fortunes of Gregory, accompanied the cardinals from Lucca to Piſa; others, in the

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" aſſembled together; and the man kept them waiting during the heat of the " day, and until the evening, all gazing at the tower, and expecting every mo- " ment that he would begin his flight. At length he appeared on the top of the " tower, and waved a pair of wings, on which the multitude gave a ſhout of " applauſe. The wag however protracted the expected expedition till after ſun- " ſet, when, reſolving that the good people ſhould not go home without ſeeing " a ſight, he deliberately drew aſide the ſkirts of his garment, and turned his " poſteriors to the multitude, who immediately returned home, exhauſted with " fatigue and hunger, and chagrined at their diſappointment." In my opinion, ſaid the cardinal, Gregory has practiſed upon the ſacred college as complete a deluſion, as the wag practiſed upon the people of Bologna.

Poggii Opera, p. 435.

(a) Platina, tom i. p. 386. 388.

the number of whom was Leonardo Aretino, adhered to their maſter.*(a)* In theſe delicate circumſtances, Poggio ſeems to have ſteered a middle courſe. He removed indeed from Lucca, but he exchanged the intrigues and diſſenſions of the pontifical palace, for the tranquil delights of friendſhip, which he enjoyed at Florence in the ſociety of his literary acquaintance.*(b)* On this occaſion he experienced the moſt ſeaſonable aſſiſtance from the countenance and ſupport of the celebrated Niccolo Niccoli. This diſtinguiſhed patron of literature, was the ſon of Bartolomeo de' Niccoli, a merchant of Florence, and was born in the year 1363.*(c)* His father wiſhed to have trained

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(a) Leon. Aret. Epiſtolæ, l. iii. *ep.* iii.

(b) Ibid. ep. iv. vii.

(c) Leonardo Aretino, in his oration againſt Niccolo Niccoli, aſſerts, that Niccolo's grandfather was a tavern-keeper at Piſtoia. "Avi autem tui caupona "Piſtorii primum floruit non dignitate aliquâ, ſed fronde illâ feſtivâ quâ ad "vinum et popinas meretrices et ganeos invitabat. Inde nocturnâ ebriorum "cæde conterritus Piſtorio demigravit, cauponam et ſerta Florentiam tranſtulit. "Hic tandem pater tuus cauponâ egreſſus vino abſtinuit, oleo ſe ac lanificio "perunxit, ſedens ad ſcamnum a matutino tempore quaſi vile mancipium, for-"dido ac prope miſerabili exercitio defamatus. Profer igitur inſignia nobilitatis "tuæ, qui alios tam inſolenter contemnis. Habes enim præclariſſima : ab avo "quidem frondes et cyathos ; a patre vero lanam et pectines."—*Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p.* xxx.

So little regard did the learned men of the fifteenth century pay to truth in their invectives, that the aſſertion of Leonardo Aretino is not ſufficient evidence of the hiſtory of Niccolo's progenitors. But this is indiſputably certain, that by endeavouring to throw ridicule upon his former friend, by a reference to the

trained him up to the mercantile profeſsion; but Niccolo, preferring the cultivation of the liberal arts to the accumulation of riches, entered upon his ſtudies, under the inſtruction of Lodovico Marſilio,*(a)* a ſcholar of conſiderable reputation. So ardent was his love of learning, that when he had attained a competent knowledge of the Latin language, he went to Padua, for the expreſs purpoſe of tranſcribing the compoſitions of Petrarca. On his return to Florence, he brought with him a copy of the *Africa*, and of various other works of that author. He had hardly attained to the period of manhood, when

occupation of his anceſtors, he only diſgraces himſelf. The *frons feſtiva*, to which he alludes in the paſſage quoted above, is the vine branch, which it was then cuſtomary to hang by way of a ſign over the doors of taverns. From a ſimilar cuſtom is derived our Engliſh proverb, "Good wine needs no buſh."

(a) Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. lxxvi. Lodovico Marſilio, was an eccleſiaſtic of the Auguſtine order, of which fraternity he became the ſuperior in the province of Piſa. His literary reputation cauſed him to be employed in the chancery of the republic of Florence, and in the year 1382, he was appointed of the number of the ambaſsadors ſent by that ſtate, to negociate a peace between Carlo, the Hungarian prince, and the duke of Anjou. In ſo great eſtimation was he held by the Florentines, that the adminiſtrators of their government applied to Boniface IX. requeſting his holineſs to promote him to the dignity of biſhop of their city. The letter which was written on this occaſion, and which details his various merits in very flattering terms, is preſerved by Mehus in his life of Ambrogio Traverſari. Lodovico carried on a correſpondence with Coluccio Salutati; and alſo with Petrarca, on a few of whoſe ſonnets he wrote a commentary. Several of his letters occur, but in a mutilated ſtate, in a collection of the epiſtles of the Tuſcan Saints, publiſhed at Florence in 4to. A. D. 1736. He died on the 21ſt of Auguſt, 1394.

Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. xxx. cclxxxv. ccxxxix. cclxi.

he conferred a memorable obligation on the learned, by erecting, at his own expenſe, a ſuitable edifice, for the reception of the library which the celebrated Bocaccio had by his laſt will bequeathed to the convent of the Holy Spirit at Florence. His houſe was the conſtant reſort of ſcholars and ſtudents, who were freely indulged with the uſe of his copious collection of books, and were moreover incited by his example, to make the moſt active exertions in the proſecution of their literary labours. The patronage of this illuſtrious citizen, who had the diſcernment to diſtinguiſh, and the inclination and ability to aſſiſt the lovers of learning, Poggio juſtly valued at a high rate. And on the other hand, Niccolo was ſo much pleaſed with the accompliſhments and the amiable diſpoſitions of Poggio, that he honoured him with his ſincere friendſhip and cordial eſteem.

Gregory, refuſing to acknowledge the legitimacy of the acts of the council of Piſa, withdrew to Rimini, where he was honourably entertained by Carlo Malateſta.*(a)* Benedict was not more obedient to the decree

(a) Gregory was accompanied to Rimini by Leonardo Aretino, who ſent to Niccolo Niccoli, an intereſting and elegant account of the remains of antiquity which then exiſted in that city. Towards the cloſe of his letter on this ſubject, Leonardo dilates with great eloquence upon the praiſes of Carlo Malateſta. After enlarging upon his merits as a ſoldier and a ſtateſman, he thus proceeds.—"So liberal has nature been in her gifts to him, that he ſeems to poſſeſs an uni-"verſal genius. He reads with the utmoſt grace—he writes verſes—he dictates "the moſt elegant proſe, and his hand-writing is ſo neat, that it is ſuperior to

cree which announced his depoſition. After holding a council at Perpignan, he defied his foes, and thundered his anathemas from the walls of the ſtrong fortreſs of Paniſcola.*(a)*

The well known virtues of Alexander V. had inſpired the friends of the church with ſanguine expectations of witneſsing the ſpeedy revival of the power and dignity of the holy ſee. But theſe flattering hopes were at once diſſipated by his death, which took place in the eighth month of his pontificate.*(b)* It was ſtrongly ſuſpected that his days were ſhortened by poiſon, adminiſtered to him by Baldaſsare Coſsa, cardinal of St. Euſtachio, who ſucceeded him in his pontifical honours.*(c)*

" that of profeſſed ſcribes. I ſhould not have mentioned this fact, had I not " found the ſame circumſtance recorded with reſpect to Auguſtus, and Titus, the " ſon of Veſpaſian."

Leonardi Aretini, Ep. l. iii. *ep.* ix.

(a) Platina ut ſuprè.

(b) Platina, p. 389.

(c) A manuſcript, containing an account of the lives of ſeveral of the pontiffs, which is printed by Muratori, in his magnificent collection of the writers of Italian hiſtory, contains the following encomium on Alexander V.—

" This pontiff, who truly deſerved the name of Alexander, would have ſur- " paſsed in liberality all his predeceſsors, to the extent of a diſtant period, had " he not been embarraſsed by the inſufficiency of his revenues. But ſo great " was his poverty, after his acceſſion to the papal chair, that he was accuſtomed

At an early period of his life, Baldaſsare ſeems to have aſpired to the higheſt eccleſiaſtical dignity. When he had finiſhed his ſtudies at Bologna, he determined to repair to Rome. Being aſked by ſome of his friends who ſaw him making preparations for his journey, whither he was going, he replied, " to the pontificate." Soon after his arrival in the capital of the church, he was advanced by Boniface IX. to the confidential office of private chamberlain; and in the courſe of a little time he obtained, from the favour of the ſame patron, the dignity of cardinal of St Euſtachio, and was ſent, inveſted with the office of legate, on an important miſsion to Bologna. In

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" to ſay, that when he was a biſhop he was rich, when he became a cardinal he " was poor, and when he was elected pontiff he was a beggar."

A little while before his death he ſummoned the cardinals, who were then attendant on his court, to his bed-ſide, and after earneſtly exhorting them to adopt ſuch meaſures after his deceaſe as were likely to ſecure the tranquillity of the church, he took leave of them, by repeating the words of our Saviour, " Peace I give you, my peace I leave unto you."

In a manuſcript volume, which formerly belonged to the houſe of Eſte, there occurs the following epitaph on this pontiff, the two concluding lines of which are ſo uncouth and obſcure, that we may reaſonably ſuſpect ſome error on the part of the tranſcriber.

Divus Alexander, Cretenſi oriundus ab orâ
Clauditur hoc ſaxo, ſummo venerandus honore.
Antea Petrus erat, ſed celſâ ſede potitus
Quintus Alexander ſit, ceu ſol orbe coruſcans,
Relligione minor, poſt ad ſublime vocatus.

Muratori Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, tom. vi. *p.* 842.

In the exerciſe of this office, he greatly contributed, by the exertion of conſiderable political and military talents, to the eſtabliſhment and extenſion of the authority of the holy ſee. It is ſaid, that the power and the money with which this ſituation ſupplied him, were the principal inſtruments of his exaltation to the chair of St. Peter. A. D. 1410. However that may be, he was unanimouſly elected to the ſovereign pontificate, on the 19th of May, 1410, and aſsumed the name of John XXII. *(a)*

About this time, Leonardo Aretino was, by the concurrent voice of the people, elected to the chancellorſhip of the city of Florence. He did not, however, long retain this office, which he found to be attended with more labour than profit. In the latter end of the enſuing year, 1411, he abdicated his municipal honours, and entered into the ſervice of John XXII. The return of his friend to the pontifical chancery, was highly gratifying to Poggio, who during the late ſtorms, had retained his ſituation, and regulating his conduct by the decrees of the council of Piſa, had acted as apoſtolic ſcribe to Alexander V, and was now, in the ſame capacity, a member of the houſehold of that pontiff's ſucceſsor.

Shortly after the reſumption of his functions in the Roman court, Leonardo took a journey to Arezzo, where he married a young lady of conſiderable diſtinction in that

(a) Platina, tom i. *p.* 389, 390.

that city. This event was of courſe very intereſting to the colleagues and friends of the bridegroom, and Poggio wrote to him on the occaſion, informing him of the witticiſms to which his preſent predicament had given riſe, and inquiring what opinion his ſhort experience had led him to form of the comforts of the conjugal ſtate. Leonardo replied to Poggio's letter without delay. By the tenor of his anſwer, he ſeems to have found nothing unpleaſant in matrimony, except its coſtlineſs. "It is "incredible," ſays he, "with what expenſe theſe new "faſhions are attended. In making proviſion for my "wedding entertainment, I emptied the market, and "exhauſted the ſhops of the perfumers, oilmen, and "poulterers. This however is comparatively a trivial "matter; but of the intolerable expenſe of female dreſs "and ornaments, there is no end. In ſhort," ſays he, "I have in one night conſummated my marriage, and "conſumed my patrimony."*(a)*

Whilſt

(a) Mehi Vita Leonardi Aretini, p. xxxix. xl. *Leonardi Aretini Epistolæ, lib.* iii. *ep.* xvii. Leonardo Aretino was eſteemed by his contemporaries too attentive to the minutiæ of oeconomy. From the peruſal of the following letter from Ermolao Barbaro to Pietro Cara, however, it ſhould ſeem, that in the fifteenth century, complaints of the expenſiveneſs of matrimony, were by no means deſtitute of foundation.

"Duxit uxorem, clarus bello et pace vir Trivulcius, Neapolitanam, prænobili "familiâ. Invitatus ſum ad convivium, immo ad pontificiam, et adipalem.

Whilſt Poggio and his aſsociates were making themſelves merry at the expenſe of the new married man; the ſuperior officers of the pontifical court were engaged in very ſerious deliberations. Sigiſmund, who had been elected to the imperial throne, July 21ſt, 1411, being earneſtly deſirous of the extinction of the ſchiſm, demanded of John the convocation of a general council; which the cardinals who had aſsembled at Piſa in the year 1409, had declared to be the only meaſure which could reſtore to Chriſtendom the bleſsings of peace. But the pontiff inherited the prejudices of his predeceſsors, againſt thoſe dangerous aſsemblies which were ſo apt to trench upon the prerogatives of the head of the church. He

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" cænam. At ego ad epulas primas ſatur, ſpectator potius quam conviva fui.
" Credo gratum fore vel tibi, vel poſteris, ſi fercula quam breviſſime deſcripſero,
" non ut Macrobius apud noſtros, nec ut apud Græcos Athenæus juſtis vo-
" luminibus, ſed ut occupatus homo, et ad epiſtolæ menſuram. Primum aqua
" manibus data, non ut apud nos, ſtantibus, ſed accumbentibus utique roſacea.
" Tum illati pugillares ex nucleis pineis, et ſaccaro paſtilli. Item placentæ nucleis
" amygdalis, et ſaccaro confectæ, quos vulgo martios paneis vocamus. Secun-
" dum fertum altiles aſparagi. Tertium pulpulæ, ita enim popinæ appellant
" et jecuſcula. Quartum caro dorcadis toſta. Quintum capitula junicum
" vitulorumve una cum pellibus elixa. Sextum capi, gallinarum, columborumque
" pulli, bubuleis comitati linguis, et petaſonibus, ac ſumine omnibus elixis ad-
" dito Lymonyacæ pultario, ſic enim Cupediarii Mediolanenſes vocant, quam
" noſtri ſermiacam. Septimum hedus integer toſtus, in ſingulas ſinguli capidas,
" cum jure quod ex amaris Ceraſis ſive ut quidam malunt appellare laurocerafis,
" condimenti vice fungitur. Octavum turtures, perdices, phaſiani, coturnices,
" turdi, ficedulæ, et omnino plurimi generis avitia, molliter et ſtudioſe toſta.
" Colymbades olivæ condimenti loco appoſitæ. Nonum gallus gallinaceus
" ſaccaro incoctus, et aſpergine roſaceâ madefactus, ſingulis convivis, ſinguli

He would gladly have evaded complying with the requiſition of Sigiſmund, and with this view, propoſed that the intended council ſhould be ſummoned to meet at Rome. But danger awaited him in his own capital. Ladiſlaus, king of Naples, whom he had endeavoured to ſecure in his interest, invaded the territory of the church, made himſelf maſter of Rome, and compelled the pontiff ſucceſsively to ſeek refuge in Florence, in Bologna, and in Mantua. From this latter city, John went to Lodi, where he was met by Sigiſmund, who accompanied by a numerous retinue, attended him on his return to Mantua. Thus finding himſelf in the power of the emperor, and flattered by the magnificent promiſes of

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" patinis argenteis, ut et cætera quoque vaſcula. Decimum porcellus integer " toſtus, in ſingula ſinguli crateria juſculento quodam liquore perfuſi. Undeci- " mum pavi toſti, pro condimento leucopheon jus, immo ferugineum e jocinoribus " piſtis, et aromate pretioſi generis, ad portionem et Symmetriam additum hyſ- " pani appellant. Duodecimum toſtus orbis ex ovo, lacte, ſalvia, polline " ſaccareo, Salviatum vocamus. Tertium decimum Struthea cotonea ex ſaccaro. " Quartum decimum, Carduus, pinea, Icolymon ſive Cynaram potius appellare " convenit. Quintum decimum a lotis manibus, bellaria et tragemata omnis ge- " neris ſaccarea. Inducti mox hiſtriones, pantomimi, petauriſtæ, aretalogi, " funambuli, choraulæ, citharædi. Singulis porro ferculis præibant faces, atque " tubæ; ſub facibus incluſa caveis altilia, quadrupedes, aviculæ. omnia viventia " generis ejus videlicet, cujus ea quæ magiſtri et ſtructores cocta menſis inferebant; " menſæ per atrium abacis ſingulæ ſingulis diſpoſitæ, ſed et privi privis miniſtri. " Ante omnia ſilentium quale ne pythagorici quidem ſervare potuiſſent. Vale " Mediolani, Idibus Maiis 1488."

Politiani Epistolæ lib. xii.

of that potentate, who profeſsed his readineſs to aſsiſt him in expelling the enemies of the church from the patrimony of St. Peter, John was perſuaded to take the deſperate ſtep of ſummoning a general council, and to appoint the city of Conſtance as the place of its meeting.*(a)*

(a) Platina, tom i. *p.* 390. 391.

CHAP. II.

JOHN XXII. opens the council of Conſtance—John Huſs arrives at that city—His impriſonment—Disagreeable propoſals made to John XXII—He eſcapes from Constance—His depoſition—Death of Manuel Cryſoloras—Poggio's funeral oration and epitaph on Cryſoloras—Trial and execution of John Huſs—The pontifical houſehold diſperſed—Poggio remains at Conſtance—His Hebrew studies—His viſit to the baths of Baden—His deſcription of thoſe baths—Jerome of Prague—Poggio's account of Jerome's trial and execution—Reflections.

CHAP. II.

THE reluctance which John XXII. felt at the propoſal of his authorizing the meeting of a general council, was encreaſed by the importunity of his relations and dependants, who prophetically warned him to take care, leſt, though he went to ſuch an aſsembly as a pope, he ſhould return as a private man.*(a)* The death of his enemy Ladiſlaus, who was cut off by a violent diſtemper as he was on his march to beſiege the pontiff in Bologna, ſeemed alſo to relieve him from the neceſsity of ſubmiting to the requiſitions of Sigiſmund. But the Chriſtian world was weary of the ſchiſm which had for ſo long a period tarniſhed the luſtre of the church. The zeal of Sigiſmund had accelerated every neceſsary preparation for the aſsembling of the council. Sanguine expectations had

(a) Platina, vol. i. *p.* 391.

had been awakened throughout Europe, of the bleſsed conſequences which were likely to reſult from the labours of an aſsemblage of the moſt dignified and learned members of the catholic community. The intrepidity of John ſhrunk from the idea of encountering the obloquy which would be poured upon his character, ſhould he, by refuſing to fulfil the engagements into which he had entered with Sigiſmund, diſappoint the reaſonable hopes of the friends of union and of peace. Poggio has recorded it to the praiſe of Zabarella, cardinal of Florence,*(a)* who ſeems to have enjoyed much of the pontiff's favour and confidence, that he faithfully impreſsed theſe conſiderations upon the heſitating mind of the father of the faithful.*(b)* Impelled by that prelate's arguments and intreaties, John took the deciſive ſtep and ſet out for Conſtance, in which city he arrived on the 28th of October, 1414. He was accompanied on his journey by the greater part of his court, and among the reſt by Poggio, whom he had promoted, from the office of apoſtolic ſcribe, to the ſtill more confidential employment of ſecretary.*(c)* In the courſe of a few weeks after his arrival, Poggio had the pleaſure of welcoming his friend Leonardo, who after a dreary journey over the Alps, of which he has left

October 28, A. D. 1414.

(a) The correct title of Zabarella, was that of St. Coſmo and St. Damien; but he is now generally known by the deſignation of cardinal of Florence.

(b) Poggii Opera, p. 255.

(c) Poggii Histor. Florent. p. 76.

left an intereſting deſcription, in a letter to Niccolo Niccoli, embarked on the lake of Conſtance, and landed at that city towards the latter end of December.*(a)*

Three principal objects demanded the utmoſt exertion of the wiſdom of the council—the termination of the ſchiſm—the reformation of the church—and the extirpation of hereſy. The pontiff earneſtly wiſhed to confine the attention of the aſſembled fathers to the laſt of theſe points. He accordingly availed himſelf of the earlieſt opportunity to engage them in proſecuting the enemies of the orthodox faith. John Huſs, a celebrated Bohemian reformer, had repaired to Conſtance with an avowed intention of vindicating the correctneſs of his creed, and of retracting any errors, of which he might be convinced by the learning of his opponents. Aware of the danger to which he would be expoſed in defending his cauſe in the midſt of his prejudiced adverſaries, he had taken the precaution of procuring from the emperor a ſafe conduct, by which all princes, as well eccleſiaſtical as ſecular, were ſtrictly enjoined "to let him freely and ſecurely "paſs, ſojourn, ſtop, and repaſs,"*(b)* But the unfortunate Bohemian ſoon found to his coſt, that the imperial mandate was inſufficient to protect a reputed heretic. He had not reſided at Conſtance many days, before

(a) Leon. Aret. Epiſt. lib. iv. *ep.* iii.

(b) L'Enfant's History of the Council of Constance, book i. *sect.* xxxix.

fore he was taken into cuſtody, and impriſoned in the monaſtery of the Dominicans. Whilſt he was there, labouring under the aggravated evils of ſevere ſickneſs, and uneaſineſs of mind, his enemies were employed in making preparations for his trial, and his friends in vain proteſted againſt the violation of the law of nations, which had been committed in his impriſonment. In conſequence of their remonſtrances, Sigiſmund had indeed given poſitive orders for Huſs's releaſe: but theſe orders were diſobeyed: and when the emperor arrived at Conſtance, on Chriſtmas day, ſufficient reaſons were alledged by the pope, to induce him to pardon this act of reſiſtance to his authority, and reſign the too credulous priſoner to the juriſdiction of an eccleſiaſtical tribunal.

But though Sigiſmund conſented to ſacrifice a defenceleſs individual to the religious zeal, or to the crooked policy of the pontifical court, he entertained deſigns by no means friendly to the intereſts of John XXII. As the jealous ſuſpicion of the partizans of the pontiff had foreſeen, the emperor, with the concurrence of the council, propoſed to his holineſs, that, in order to put an end to the ſchiſm, he ſhould ſolemnly engage to reſign the tiara, in caſe his competitors, Gregory XII, and Benedict XIII, could be perſuaded to concur with him, by taking a ſimilar ſtep. John with difficulty ſmothered the indignation which this propoſal excited within his ardent mind. Profeſsing however, his readineſs to comply with the wiſhes of the aſsembled repreſentatives of the Chriſtian

Chriſtian church, he threw every poſsible obſtacle in the way of their completion. Being at length puſhed to extremity by the importunity of Sigiſmund, who had in a manner compelled him to read the inſtrument of his reſignation in open council, he meditated the deſperate deſign of withdrawing from Conſtance. By the aſsiſtance of the duke of Auſtria he was enabled to put this deſign into execution. That prince, in order to favour the flight of the pontiff, inſtituted a grand tournament on the 20th day of March, which was the eve of the feſtival of St. Benedict. While the attention of all orders of men was abſorbed by this magnificent ſpectacle, John eaſily found an opportunity of paſsing through the city gates in the diſguiſe of a poſtillion.

The fugitive pontiff withdrew firſt to Schaffauſen, and afterwards to Lauffenbourg. Not thinking himſelf ſufficiently ſecure, even in this latter place, he took ſhelter in Fribourg. Here he at length deemed himſelf beyond the reach of his adverſaries; and in the pride of confidence, he ſent to the council certain extravagant demands, which that aſsembly treated with contempt. In the mean time the duke of Auſtria had been put under the ban of the empire; his territories had been invaded on all ſides; many of his towns had been taken; and he was given to underſtand, that nothing leſs than the moſt unequivocal acts of humiliation, and the delivering up of the contumacious pontiff, could reconcile him to his imperial ſovereign. He accordingly repaired to Conſtance,

and in a moſt ſolemn aſſembly of the council, craved pardon of Sigiſmund, and ſurrendered to him the remnant of his dominions.

The council now proceeded to ſummon John to appear and anſwer to divers articles of impeachment, which had been preferred againſt him; and on his refuſing to attend, either in perſon or by proxy, the members of that aſſembly proceeded to exercife a memorable act of ſupremacy, by firſt ſuſpending him from the diſcharge of the pontifical functions, and afterwards decreeing and proclaiming his depoſition. John, finding himſelf deſerted by the duke of Auſtria, and at the abſolute diſpoſal of the emperor, ſubmitted to the ordinance of the council. After the annunciation of his ſentence, the officers of his houſehold were diſcharged from their cuſtomary attendance on his perſon, and he was ſent a priſoner to the fortreſs of Gotleben, whence he was ſoon afterwards transferred to Heidleberg. The articles of impeachment, declared by the council to have been proved againſt John, charged him with the moſt atrocious vices incident to the vileſt corruption of human nature. Influenced however by the conſideration of the exalted rank which he had lately held, and perhaps mollified by the meekneſs of his ſubmiſsion, his judges were ſatisfied with the meaſure of puniſhment which they had already inflicted, in degrading him from his dignity, and depriving him of liberty.

May 14th. A. D. 1415.

Whilſt

Whilſt the council was thus occupied in contention with the head of the church, it was deprived of an illuſtrious member, by the death of Manuel Cryſoloras. It has been already obſerved, that this eminent ſcholar, by his aſſiduous labours, diffuſed a knowledge and admiration of Grecian literature, amongſt a numerous aſſemblage of pupils in the univerſity of Florence, and that Poggio had there the good fortune to enjoy the advantage of his inſtructions. After a reſidence of three years in the Tuſcan capital, Manuel was ſummoned to Milan by his ſovereign, the eaſtern emperor, who, in the courſe of his progreſs through Italy, was then paying a viſit to Giovanni Galeazzo. *(a)* Having received advantageous propoſals from the latter prince, and being deterred from returning to Florence, by the violence of Niccolo Niccoli, who had become his bitter enemy, he undertook to read lectures on the Greek language in the academy of Ticino, an inſtitution which had been juſt founded by the late duke of Milan, the father of Giovanni. *(b)* The tumult and anarchy which enſued after the death of his patron, compelled Manuel to quit the Milaneſe, and take ſhelter in Venice, whence, at the recommendation of his pupil Leonardo Aretino, he was invited to Rome. In this city his talents and his virtues raiſed him to ſuch a degree of reſpectabi-

(a) Hodius de Græcis illustribus, p. 14.

(b) Hodius, p. 15.

lity, that in the year 1413, Martin V. empowered him, jointly with Zabarella, cardinal of Florence, to treat with Sigiſmund upon the choice of a place proper for the holding of the approaching council; and it was with his concurrence that the city of Conſtance was fixed upon as being well adapted for that purpoſe.*(a)* Having faithfully executed this important commiſsion, he returned to Conſtantinople, where he was appointed by the emperor of the eaſt to attend the council as one of the repreſentatives of the Greek church. He accordingly repaired to Conſtance, where the delicacy of his conſtitution ſinking under the fatigues of buſineſs, he died on the 15th of April, 1415.*(b)* His remains were depoſited in the Dominican monaſtery, and a monument was erected to his memory, on which was engraven the following inſcription, ſaid to have been compoſed by his diſciple Pietro Paulo Vergerio.*(c)*

" Ante

(a) Hodius, p. 15.

(b) Ibid.

(c) Pietro Paulo Vergerio was a native of Capo d' Iſtria, a town ſituated at the extremity of the Adriatic gulf, not far from Trieſte. He was eminent for his knowledge of the civil law, and made conſiderable proficiency in the ſtudy of philoſophy and the mathematics. Under the inſtruction of Manuel Cryſoloras, he alſo attained a reſpectable knowledge of the Grecian language. He compoſed a treatiſe, *De moribus ingenuis*, which was received by the literary characters of his time with conſiderable applauſe; and at the requeſt of the emperor Sigiſmund, he tranſlated into Latin Arrian's hiſtory of the expedition of Alexander the Great. In the execution of this tranſlation, he purpoſely avoided

" Ante aram ſitus eſt D. Emanuel Chryſoloras, eques
" Conſtantinopolitanus, ex vetuſto genere Romanorum,
" qui cum Conſtantino Imperatore migrarunt. Vir doc-
" tiſsimus, prudentiſsimus, optimus, qui tempore Gene-
" ralis Concilii diem obiit, eâ exiſtimatione, ut ab om-
" nibus ſummo ſacerdotio dignus haberetur, die xv.
" Aprilis, MCCCCXV." *(a)*

Poggio did not neglect this laſt opportunity of teſtifying his ſenſe of the merits of his illuſtrious tutor. He celebrated his praiſes in a funeral oration, and dedicated to his memory the following epitaph:

" Hic eſt Emanuel ſitus
" Sermonis decus Attici:
" Qui dum quærere opem patriæ
" Afflictæ ſtuderet huc iit.
" Res belle cecidit tuis
" Votis, Italia; hic tibi

" Linguæ

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the cultivation of elegance of ſtyle, through an apprehenſion, as he himſelf ſaid, leſt his royal reader ſhould ſtand in need of the aſſiſtance of an interpreter. He teſtified his zeal for the honour of claſsical learning, by publiſhing an invective againſt Carlo Malateſta, who, in deteſtation of heathens and heatheniſm, had removed from the market place of Mantua, a ſtatue of Virgil. In the latter period of his life he loſt his reaſon, which however returned at intervals before his death, the date of which event is uncertain.

Facius de Viris illustribus, p. 8.

(a) Hodius, p. 23.

" Linguæ reſtituit decus
" Atticæ, ante reconditæ.
" Res bellè cecidit tuis
" Votis, Emanuel; ſolo
" Conſecutus in Italo
" Æternum decus es, tibi
" Quale Græcia non dedit
" Bello perdita Græcia." *(a)*

In the mildneſs of the ſentence paſsed by the council upon the delinquent pontiff, the members of that aſsembly ſeem to have exhauſted their ſtock of leniency. Their mercy was reſerved for dignified offenders; and it appears by their ſubſequent conduct, that however tender and gentle they might be in puniſhing immorality of practice, the unrelenting fury of their vengeance was excited by errors in matters of opinion. The proceſs againſt John Huſs was expedited with all the ardour of eccleſiaſtical zeal. The unfortunate reformer was at various times brought in chains before a tribunal, on which his enemies ſat in quality of judges; and, ſurrounded by a military guard, was called upon to anſwer to a long ſeries of articles of accuſation, the greater part of which related to the moſt myſterious and ſubtile points of doctrine. To ſome of theſe articles he pleaded not guilty. Many of the propoſitions which were imputed to him as errors in faith, he defended

(a) *Hodius, p.* 23.

defended as true; at the ſame time declaring his readineſs to retract any doctrine, of the erroneouſneſs of which he ſhould be convinced. His judges having in vain endeavoured to enlighten his underſtanding by argument, had recourſe to the terrors of authority. They declared him guilty of hereſy, and attempted to overawe him to a recantation, by the dread of a painful death. But the conſtancy of Huſs was unſhaken. He firmly refuſed to purchaſe life at the expenſe of truth and honour. After various unſucceſsful efforts to perſuade him to make his peace with the church, by timely ſubmiſsion, the council proceeded to degrade him from his prieſtly office, and after proclaiming the awful ſentence which condemned him as an obſtinate heretic, delivered him over to the ſecular power. On the ſixth day of July, 1415, Huſs was led to the fatal pile, where he ſuffered death, with the intrepidity of a reſolute mind, ſupported by the conſciouſneſs of rectitude, and by the firm conviction of religious faith, which, happily for the oppreſsed, are not the excluſive privileges of any ſect, but beſtow their animating influence on the perſecuted advocates of every varying ſhade of theological belief. July 6th. A. D. 1415.

On the diſperſion of the pontifical houſehold, conſequent upon the depoſition of John XXII. Leonardo Aretino returned to Italy, where he reſumed his literary purſuits with great aſsiduity. Poggio remained at Conſtance, for the purpoſe of improving any opportunity which might there occur, of promoting his own intereſt,

or that of his friend. As he had now a good deal of leiſure, he employed his vacant hours in ſtudying the Hebrew language, under the direction of a Jew who had been converted to the Chriſtian faith.*(a)* His continuance in Germany was not however productive either of immediate pleaſure, or of preſent emolument. He was wearied and diſguſted by the tedious protraction of the debates of the council. He regarded the proceedings of that aſſembly, with the prejudices which naturally rendered them odious to the members of the papal court; and the mortifications experienced at Conſtance by ſeveral of his friends, excited in his breaſt ſentiments of ſorrow and indignation.*(b)* His hopes of preferment became more and more faint, as the power of his patrons was diminiſhed by the intrigues of their adverſaries; and in ſhort, whereſoever he turned his eyes, his proſpect was gloomy and diſcouraging. The ſtudy of Hebrew does not ſeem to have poſſeſſed ſufficient charms to beguile the uneaſineſs which he experienced, in conſequence of theſe various diſtreſſes. The rudiments of that language are peculiarly intricate; and Poggio was not ſtimulated by incentives

(a) *Poggii Opera, p.* 297.

(b) *Leonardi Aretini Epist. lib.* iv. *ep.* iv. This letter is erroneouſly dated January 10, 1415. Aretino wrote from Conſtance a deſcription of his journey to that city, on the 29th of December, 1414. It is therefore evidently impoſſible, that he could have returned to Italy, and have there received letters from Poggio within twelve days from that date. For 1415, we ſhould certainly read 1416.

incentives ſufficiently powerful, to induce him to ſurmount the difficulties which preſented themſelves at the commencement of this new purſuit. For all the purpoſes of the Chriſtian faith he had been taught, and in all probability believed, that St. Jerome's tranſlation of the Jewiſh ſcriptures was amply ſufficient. As he was not diſpoſed to call in queſtion the prevailing creed, he did not wiſh to make himſelf maſter of the oriental tongues, with a view of providing himſelf with the weapons of religious controverſy. In the brief and authoritative precepts of the Iſraelitiſh moraliſts, he looked in vain for the flow of eloquent argument, which had captivated his attention in the ethic diſquiſitions of Cicero. The abrupt tranſitions, and ſwelling metaphors of the Hebrew poets, though, in a variety of individual inſtanees, ſtriking in effect, generally ſhrunk from the ſevere teſt of the rules of Ariſtotle and Quintilian.*(a)* The Hebrew language

(a) Leonardo Aretino, who does not appear to have poſſeſſed the ſlighteſt knowledge of Hebrew, in a very curious letter to Giovanni Cirignano, entered into a long train of argument, to prove the inutility of the ſtudy of that language. Nothing is more diſguſting, than the propenſity of men of narrow minds to undervalue thoſe acquiſitions in knowledge, to which they have not themſelves attained; and which they conſequently have not the means of appreciating. Excellent indeed is the precept of the Apulian bard,

" Neu tua plus laudes ſtudia, aut aliena reprendas."

This letter of Leonardo alſo ſhews the unhappy influence of religious bigotry and ſacerdotal tyranny, in checking the progreſs of ſcience. The moſt cogent argument which he advances, to prove the folly of ſpending time in the

was not, like the Latin tongue, of practical uſe in the daily affairs of a literary or political life; and finally, his inſtructor was a man of no talents or reſpectability of character, and ſoon became the butt of his ridicule, and the object of his ſovereign contempt. Theſe cauſes concurred to check his progreſs in biblical ſtudies, in which he does not appear to have made any great proficiency.

The amuſement which he in vain ſought for in the extenſion of his literary attainments, he found in a total
A. D. 1416. ſuſpenſion of his ſtudies. In the ſpring of the year 1416, he took advantage of the leiſure time afforded him, by the termination of his functions as ſecretary to the depoſed pontiff, to make an excurſion to the baths of Baden.*(a)* Of theſe baths he gave a deſcription in the following letter, which he addreſsed to Niccolo Niccoli; and which, whilſt it exhibits an intereſting picture of a faſhionable

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peruſal of the Hebrew ſcriptures, is this, that St. Jerome, having tranſlated the Old Teſtament into Latin, whoſoever preſumes to ſtudy that book in the original, manifeſts a diſtruſt of the fidelity of Jerome's verſion.

Leonardi Aretini Epist. lib. ix. *ep.* xii.

(a) In the letter which Poggio wrote from Baden to Niccolo Niccoli, he ſays, that he wrote to him from Conſtance on the 19th of February, 1416; and in another letter, addreſsed to Leonardo Aretino, he ſays, that the trial of Jerome of Prague took place a few days after his return to the council. As Jerome's laſt hearing, to which Poggio evidently alludes, took place May 30th, 1416, the date of Poggio's journey to Baden is fixed between the abovementioned periods, that is, in the ſpring of 1416.

faſhionable watering place of the fifteenth century, diſplays a ſportiveneſs of fancy, and an expanſion of good humour, which were characteriſtic and attractive features of Poggio's mind.

" I wrote to you from Conſtance, on the firſt of " March, if my memory be correct, a letter, which, if it " came to hand, I imagine made you tolerably merry. " It was rather long, and pregnant with wit. I gave " you in it a long account of my Hebrew ſtudies, and " paſsed many jokes upon my tutor, a ſtupid, unſteady, " and illiterate man; which indeed is the general cha- " racter of thoſe who are converted from Judaiſm to " Chriſtianity. But I am inclined to ſuſpect, that this " letter, and another which I addreſsed to Leonardo " Aretino, did not reach their deſtination. Had you " received my epiſtle, you would ſurely have anſwered " it, were it only with the view of congratulating me " on my new courſe of ſtudy, which you have ſo fre- " quently exhorted me to undertake. I cannot find that " the ſtudy of Hebrew adds to my ſtock of philoſophical " knowledge; but it ſo far promotes my acquaintance " with literature, that I am thereby enabled to inveſti- " gate the principles upon which St. Jerome founded " his tranſlation of the ſcriptures. But I write to you " from theſe baths, (to which I am come to try whether " they can remove an eruption which has taken place " between my fingers) to deſcribe to you the ſituation " of the place, and the manners of its inhabitants, toge-

" ther with the cuſtoms of the company who reſort
" hither for the benefit of the waters. Much is ſaid by
" the ancients of the pleaſant baths of Puteoli, which
" were frequented by almoſt all the people of Rome.
" But in my opinion, theſe boaſted baths muſt, in the
" article of pleaſure, yield the palm to the baths of
" Baden. For the pleaſantneſs of the baths of Puteoli
" was founded more on the beauty of the circumjacent
" country, and the magnificence of the neighbouring
" villas, than on the feſtive manners of the company by
" which they were frequented. The ſcenery of Baden,
" on the contrary, has but few attractions; but every
" other circumſtance relating to its medicinal ſprings, is
" ſo pregnant with delight, that I frequently imagine
" that Venus, and all her attendant joys, have migrated
" hither from Cyprus. The frequenters of theſe waters
" ſo faithfully obſerve her inſtitutes, ſo accurately copy
" her manners, that though they have not read the diſ-
" courſe of Heliogabalus, they ſeem to be amply in-
" ſtructed by ſimple nature. But I muſt in the firſt place
" give you an account of my journey hither. On the
" firſt day I ſailed down the Rhine twenty-four miles to
" Schaffauſen. Here we were obliged to paſs the falls
" by land; and at the diſtance of ten miles from Schaff-
" auſen we arrived at a fortreſs, ſituated on the Rhine,
" and known by the name of Keiſterſtul, that is, Cæſar's
" ſeat. From the name of this place, and from its com-
" manding ſituation, (for it is built on a high hill over-
" hanging the river, acroſs which is thrown a ſmall
" bridge,

" bridge, which effects a communication between France
" and Germany) I conjecture it was formerly a Roman
" ſtation. In this day's journey we ſaw the Rhine pre-
" cipitating itſelf from a conſiderable height, over craggy
" rocks, with a ſound which ſeemed to expreſs the
" indignation of the river at being thus impeded in its
" courſe. When I contemplated this ſight, I recollected
" the ſtories which are related concerning the cataracts
" of the Nile, and I did not wonder that the people who
" live in the vicinity of thoſe waterfalls, were deprived
" of their hearing by their noiſe, when a river of ſo
" comparatively ſmall a magnitude, that with reſpect to
" the Nile it may be denominated a torrent, may be
" heard to the diſtance of half a mile. The next town
" is Baden, which word, in the German language, ſig-
" nifies a bath. Baden is a place of conſiderable opu-
" lence, ſituated in a valley ſurrounded by mountains,
" upon a broad and rapid river, which forms a junction
" with the Rhine, about ſix miles from the town. About
" half a mile from Baden, and on the bank of the river,
" there is a very beautiful range of buildings, conſtructed
" for the accommodation of the bathers. Theſe build-
" ings form a ſquare, compoſed of lodging houſes, in
" which a great multitude of gueſts are commodiouſly
" entertained. Each lodging houſe has its private bath,
" appropriated to its tenants. The baths are altogether
" thirty in number. Of theſe, two only are public baths,
" which are expoſed to view on every ſide, and are fre-
" quented by the lower orders of people, of all ages, and

" of

" of each ſex. Here the males and females, entertaining
" no hoſtile diſpoſitions towards each other, are ſeparated
" only by a ſimple railing. It is a droll ſight to ſee de-
" crepit old women and blooming maidens, ſtepping into
" the water, and expoſing their charms to the profane
" eyes of the men. I have often laughed at this exhibi-
" tion, which reminded me of the Floral games of Rome.
" And I have at the ſame time admired the ſimplicity of
" theſe people, who take no notice of theſe violations of
" propriety, and are totally unconſcious of any indecorum.
" The baths belonging to the private houſes are very
" neat. They too are common to males and females,
" who are ſeparated by a partition. In this partition,
" however, there are low windows, through which they
" can ſee and converſe with, and touch each other, and
" alſo drink together; all which circumſtances are mat-
" ters of common occurrence. Above the baths are a
" kind of galleries, on which the people ſtand who wiſh
" to ſee and converſe with the bathers; for every one
" has free acceſs to all the baths, to ſee the company, to
" talk and joke with them. As the ladies go in and out
" of the water, they expoſe to view a conſiderable por-
" tion of their perſons; yet there are no door-keepers,
" or even doors, nor do they entertain the leaſt idea of
" any thing approaching to indelicacy. Many of the
" baths have a common paſsage for the two ſexes, which
" circumſtance very frequently occaſions very curious
" rencounters. The men wear only a pair of drawers.
" The women are clad in linen veſts, which are however

" ſlaſhed

" ſlaſhed in the ſides, ſo that they neither cover the neck,
" the breaſt, nor the arms of the wearer. The ladies
" frequently give public dinners in the baths, on a table
" which floats on the water; and the men often partake
" of theſe entertainments. Our party received ſeveral
" invitations. I paid my ſhare of the reckoning; but
" though I was frequently requeſted to favour them with
" my company, I never accepted the ſummons; not
" through modeſty—which would, on theſe occaſions, be
" miſtaken for rudeneſs, and want of good breeding;
" but on account of my ignorance of the language. For
" it ſeemed to me an act of folly in an Italian, who
" could not take any part in converſation, to ſpend all
" the day in the water, employed in nothing but eat-
" ing and drinking. But two of my companions were
" not ſo ſcrupulous. They viſited the ladies in the baths,
" and aſſiſted at their entertainment. They converſed
" with them, by the medium of an interpreter; and
" when their fair hoſteſſes were incommoded by the heat,
" they had the honour of fanning them. On their re-
" turn, they ſpoke with great pleaſure of the kind re-
" ception which they had experienced. When they thus
" viſited the ladies, they were clothed in linen gowns.
" From the gallery which I have mentioned above, I
" was a witneſs of this ſcene; and I was aſtoniſhed to
" behold, with what unſuſpecting ſimplicity they con-
" ducted themſelves, and with what full confidence the
" huſbands ſuffered their wives to be handed about in
" their diſhabille by ſtrangers. They were not uneaſy;

" they

" they did not even attend to the circumſtance, but
" ſaw every tranſaction in the moſt favourable light.
" They are well prepared to embrace the doctrine of
" Plato, who would have all things in common; for
" without inſtruction, they are already in a great meaſure
" converts to his principles. In ſome of the private
" baths, the men mix promiſcuouſly with their female
" relatives and friends. They go into the water three or
" four times every day; and they ſpend the greater part
" of their time in the baths, where they amuſe themſelves
" with ſinging, drinking, and dancing. In the ſhallower
" part of the water they alſo play upon the harp. It is
" a pleaſant ſight, to ſee young laſſes tuning their lyres,
" like nymphs, with their ſcanty robes floating on the
" ſurface of the waters. They look indeed like ſo many
" Venuſes, emerging from the ocean. The women have a
" cuſtom of playfully begging from the men who come to
" ſee them bathe. The latter throw down ſmall pieces of
" money, which they direct to the fairer damſels. The
" The ladies below ſtretch out their hands, and ſpread
" their bathing gowns, to receive theſe gifts, which fre-
" quently give riſe to a general ſcramble. This ſcram-
" ble, you will eaſily conceive, occaſions very laughable
" incidents. Beſides money, garlands and crowns of
" flowers are thrown down, with which the ladies or-
" nament their heads while they remain in the water.
" As I only bathed twice a day, I ſpent my leiſure time
" in witneſsing this curious ſpectacle, viſiting the other
" baths, and cauſing the girls to ſcramble for money and
" noſegays;

" noſegays; for there was no opportunity of reading or
" ſtudying. The whole place reſounded with ſongs and
" muſical inſtruments, ſo that the mere wiſh to be wiſe,
" were the height of folly; in me eſpecially, who am
" not like Menedemus in the play, a moroſe rejecter of
" pleaſure, but one of thoſe who take a lively intereſt in
" every thing which concerns their fellow mortals. My
" pleaſure was however much leſs than it would have
" been, had I been able to converſe with my new ac-
" quaintance. Circumſtanced as I was, I could only feaſt
" my eyes, wait on the ladies, and attend them to the ren-
" dezvous of amuſement. I had alſo an opportunity of
" paying my court to them, as againſt this there was no
" prohibitory law. Beſides theſe various paſtimes, there
" is alſo another, which is a ſource of no ſmall gratifica-
" tion. There is a large meadow behind the village, near
" the river. This meadow, which is ſhaded by abundance
" of trees, is our uſual place of reſort after ſupper.
" Here the people engage in various ſports. Some dance,
" others ſing, and others play at ball, but in a manner
" very different from the faſhion of our country. For
" the men and women throw, in different directions, a
" ball, filled with little bells. When the ball is thrown,
" they all run to catch it, and whoever lays hold of it
" is the conqueror, and again throws it at ſomebody for
" whom he wiſhes to teſtify a particular regard. When
" the thrower is ready to toſs the ball, all the reſt ſtand
" with outſtretched hands, and the former frequently
" keeps them in a ſtate of ſuſpenſe, by pretending to aim,

" ſometimes at one, and ſometimes at another. Many
" other games are here practiſed, which it would be te-
" dious to enumerate. I have related enough to give
" you an idea what a numerous ſchool of Epicureans is
" eſtabliſhed at Baden. I think this muſt be the place
" where the firſt man was created, which the Hebrews
" call the garden of pleaſure. If pleaſure can make a
" man happy, this place is certainly poſſeſſed of every
" requiſite for the promotion of felicity.

" But you will perhaps wiſh to know what are the
" virtues of the waters. Their virtues are various and
" manifold; but they have one quality which is truly
" wonderful, and in a manner divine. I believe there
" are no baths in the world more efficacious in promoting
" the propagation of the human ſpecies. This may in-
" deed be in ſome meaſure accounted for by the follow-
" ing circumſtance—An innumerable multitude of per-
" ſons of all ranks repair to this place from the diſtance
" of two hundred miles; not with a view of recruiting
" their health, but of enjoying life. These baths are the
" general resort of lovers and their miſtreſſes, of all, in
" ſhort, who are fond of pleaſure. Many ladies pretend
" to be ſick, merely with a view of being ſent for cure to
" this watering place. You conſequently ſee here a
" great number of handſome females without their huſ-
" bands, and not protected by any male relations, but
" attended by a couple of maids and a man ſervant, or
" ſome elderly couſin, who is very eaſily impoſed upon.

" And

" And they come adorned with ſuch coſtly apparel, that
" you would ſuppoſe they were coming to a wedding,
" rather than to a watering place. Here we find Veſtal,
" or to ſpeak more correctly, Floral virgins. Here we
" meet with abbots, monks, friars, and prieſts, who
" live with greater licenſe than the reſt of the com-
" pany. Theſe eccleſiaſtics, forgetting the gravity of
" their profeſsion, ſometimes bathe with the ladies, and
" adorn their hair with ſilken ribbons. For all people
" here concur in baniſhing ſorrow, and courting mirth.
" Their object is, not to divide that which is common,
" but to communicate that which is appropriated. It is
" an aſtoniſhing circumſtance, that in ſo great a multi-
" tude (nearly a thouſand perſons) of various diſpoſitions,
" and ſo much given to riot, no diſcord or diſenſion ever
" ariſes. The huſbands ſee their wives gallanted, and
" even attended tete à tete by ſtrangers, and yet they are
" not diſturbed or rendered uneaſy. Hence it happens,
" that the name of jealouſy, that plague, which is elſe-
" where productive of ſo much miſery, is here unknown.
" How unlike are the manners of theſe people to ours,
" who always ſee things on the dark ſide, and who are
" ſo much given to cenſoriouſneſs, that in our minds the
" ſlighteſt ſuſpicion inſtantly grows into full proof of
" guilt. I often envy the apathy of theſe Germans, and
" I execrate our perverſity, who are always wiſhing for
" what we have not, and are continually expoſed to pre-
" ſent calamity by our dread of the future. But theſe
" people, content with little, enjoy their day of life in

" mirth and merriment; they do not hanker after wealth;
" they are not anxious for the morrow; and they bear
" adverſity with patience. Thus are they rich by the
" mere diſpoſition of their minds. Their motto is, *live*
" *while you live.* But of this enough—it is not my
" object to extol my new friends at the expenſe of my
" countrymen. I wiſh my epiſtle to conſiſt of unqua-
" lified good humour, that I may impart to you a portion
" of the pleaſure I derived from the baths of Baden."

Soon after Poggio's return from Baden to Conſtance, the Council proceeded to the trial of Jerome of Prague, an intimate friend and aſsociate of John Huſs. When Jerome was apprized of the arreſt and impriſonment of his brother reformer, he deemed himſelf bound in honour to repair to Conſtance, to adminiſter to him comfort and aſsiſtance. He accordingly arrived in that city on the 24th of April, 1415.*(a)* But alarmed by the violence of ſpirit which ſeemed to rage againſt reputed heretics, he ſoon fled from Conſtance, and went to Uberlingen, whence he ſent to the council to demand a ſafe conduct. Inſtead of this inſtrument of protection, the members of that aſsembly addreſsed to him a citation to appear before them, and anſwer to a charge of hereſy.*(b)* Juſtly dreading the conſequences of encountering the prejudices of

(a) L' Enfant's History of the Council of Constance, vol. i. *p.* 167.

(b) Ibid. p. 188.

of the eccleſiaſtical dignitaries, whoſe morals and principles he had ſo often branded with infamy, he refuſed to obey this citation, and ſet off on his return to Bohemia. He proceeded without moleſtation as far as Hirſaw; but there he was arreſted by the officers of the duke of Sultzbach, who ſent him in chains to Conſtance.*(a)* Immediately after his arrival in that city, he underwent an examination, after which he was committed to priſon. The ſeverity which he there experienced, the importunity of ſome of his proſecutors, and his ſolitary meditations on the dreadful cataſtrophe of Huſs, at length ſhook his conſtancy, and on the fifteenth of September, 1415, he read in open council, a recantation of his errors.*(b)* At this price he purchaſed a relaxation of the rigour of his confinement: but, notwithſtanding the remonſtrances of Zabarella, and of three other cardinals, who contended, that by his renunciation of error, he had ſatisfied public juſtice, he was detained in cuſtody. In the courſe of a few months after his recantation, new articles of impeachment were exhibited againſt him. To theſe he pleaded in a ſolemn aſſembly of the council, held for that purpoſe, on the twenty-ſixth of May, 1416.*(c)* Poggio, who was preſent at this ſecond trial of Jerome, gave

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(a) L' Enfant's History of the Council of Constance, vol. i. p. 204.

(b) Ibid. p. 512.

(c) Ibid. p. 584.

gave the following interesting account of it to his friend Leonardo Aretino.*(a)*

" Soon after my return from Baden to Conſtance, " the cauſe of Jerome of Prague, who was accuſed of " hereſy, came to a public hearing. The purport of my " preſent letter is to give you an account of this trial, " which muſt of neceſsity be a matter of conſiderable " intereſt, both on account of the importance of the " ſubject, and the eloquence and learning of the de- " fendant. I muſt confeſs that I never ſaw any one " who in pleading a cauſe, eſpecially a cauſe on the " iſsue of which his own life depended, approached " nearer to that ſtandard of ancient eloquence, which " we ſo much admire. It was aſtoniſhing to witneſs " with what choice of words, with what cloſeneſs of " argument, with what confidence of countenance he " replied to his adverſaries. So impreſsive was his pe- " roration, that it is a ſubject of great concern, that a " man of ſo noble and excellent a genius ſhould have " deviated into hereſy. On this latter point however, " I cannot help entertaining ſome doubts. But far be " it from me, to take upon myſelf to decide in ſo im- " portant a matter. I ſhall acquieſce in the opinion of " thoſe who are wiſer than myſelf.

" Do

(a) In the *Fasciculus Rer. expet. et fugiend.* it is erroneouſly aſserted that the following letter was addreſsed to Niccolo Niccoli.

" Do not however imagine that I intend to enter into " the particulars of this cauſe. I ſhall only touch upon " the more remarkable and intereſting circumſtances, " which will be ſufficient to give you an idea of the " learning of the man."

" Many things having been alledged againſt the priſoner, " as proofs of his entertaining heretical notions, and the " council being of opinon, that the proof was ſufficiently " ſtrong to warrant further inveſtigation, it was ordered " that he ſhould publicly anſwer to every particular of the " charge. He was accordingly brought before the coun- " cil. But when he was called upon to give in his an- " ſwers, he for a long time refuſed ſo to do; alledging, " that he ought to be permitted to ſpeak generally in his " defence, before he replied to the falſe imputations of " his adverſaries. This indulgence was however denied " him. Upon which, ſtanding up in the midſt of the " aſsembly—What groſs injuſtice is this! exclaimed he, " that though for the ſpace of three hundred and forty " days, which I have ſpent in filth and fetters, deprived " of every comfort, in priſons ſituated at the moſt remote " diſtances from each other, you have been continually " liſtening to my adverſaries and ſlanderers, you will not " hear me for a ſingle hour! The conſequence of this " is, that while on the one hand, every one's ears are " open to them, and they have for ſo long a time been " attempting to perſuade you that I am a heretic, an " enemy of the true faith, a perſecutor of the clergy;

" and

" and on the other hand, I am deprived of every oppor-
" tunity of defending myſelf: you have prejudged my
" cauſe, and have in your own minds condemned me,
" before you could poſsibly become acquainted with my
" principles. But, ſays he, you are not Gods, but men,
" not immortals, but mortals, liable to error, and ſubject
" to imperfection. We are taught to believe that this
" aſsembly contains the light of the world, the prudent
" men of the earth. You ought therefore to be unre-
" mittingly careful not to do any thing raſhly, fooliſhly,
" or unjuſtly. I indeed, who am pleading for my life,
" am a man of little conſequence; nor do I ſay what I
" do ſay through anxiety for myſelf (for I am prepared
" to ſubmit to the common lot of mortality)—but I am
" prompted by an earneſt deſire, that the collective wiſ-
" dom of ſo many eminent men may not, in my perſon,
" violate the laws of juſtice. As to the injury done to
" myſelf, it is comparatively of trifling conſequence;
" but the precedent will be pregnant with future mis-
" chief. Theſe and many other obſervations he made
" with great eloquence; but he was interrupted by the
" murmurs and clamour of ſeveral of his auditors. It
" was decreed, that he ſhould firſt anſwer to the charges
" exhibited againſt him, and afterwards have free liberty
" of ſpeech. The heads of the accuſation were accor-
" dingly read from the deſk. When, after they had been
" proved by teſtimony, he was aſked whether he had
" any remarks to make in his defence; it is incredible
" with what ſkill and judgment he put in his anſwers.

" He

" He advanced nothing unbecoming a good man; and if
" his real ſentiments agreed with his profeſsions, he was
" ſo far from deſerving to die, that his principles did not
" even give juſt ground for the ſlighteſt offence. He
" denied the whole impeachment, as a fiction invented
" by the malice of his enemies. Among others an arti-
" cle was read, which accuſed him of being a detractor
" of the apoſtolic ſee, an oppugner of the Roman pontiff,
" an enemy of the cardinals, a perſecutor of prelates,
" and an adverſary of the Chriſtian clergy. When this
" charge was read, he aroſe, and ſtretching out his hands,
" he ſaid in a pathetic tone of voice, Fathers! to whom
" ſhall I have recourſe for ſuccour? Whoſe aſsiſtance
" ſhall I implore? Unto whom ſhall I appeal, in protes-
" tation of my innocence?—Unto you?—But theſe my
" perſecutors have prejudiced your minds againſt me, by
" declaring that I entertain hoſtility againſt all my judges.
" Thus have they artfully endeavoured, if they cannot
" reach me by their imputations of error, ſo to excite
" your fears, that you may be induced to ſeize any plau-
" ſible pretext to deſtroy your common enemy, such as
" they moſt falſely repreſent me to be. Thus, if you
" give credit to their aſsertion, all my hopes of ſafety
" are loſt. He cauſed many to ſmart by the keenneſs of
" his wit, and the bitterneſs of his reproaches. Melan-
" choly as the occaſion was, he frequently excited laugh-
" ter, by turning to ridicule the imputations of his ad-
" verſaries. When he was aſked, what were his ſenti-
" ments concerning the ſacrament, he replied, that it

" was by nature bread; but that at the time of conſe-
" cration, and afterwards, it was the true body of Chriſt,
" &c. according to the ſtricteſt orthodoxy. Then ſome
" one ſaid, but it is reported that you have maintained,
" that there remains bread after conſecration—True, ſaid
" Jerome, there remains bread at the baker's. When
" one of the order of preaching friars was railing againſt
" him with uncommon aſperity, he ſaid to him—Hold
" thy peace, hypocrite. When another ſwore by his
" conſcience, this, ſaid he, is a very ſafe mode of deceiv-
" ing. One man, who was particularly inveterate againſt
" him, he never addreſsed but by the title of aſs or dog.
" As, on account of the number and importance of the
" articles exhibited againſt him, the cauſe could not be
" determined at that ſitting, the court was adjourned to
" another day, on which the proofs of each article of
" impeachment were read over, and confirmed by more
" witneſses. Then he aroſe and ſaid, Since you have at-
" tended ſo diligently to my adverſaries, I have a right
" to demand that you ſhould alſo hear me with patience.
" Though many violently objected to this demand, it
" was at length conceded to him that he ſhould be heard
" in his defence. He then began by ſolemnly praying
" to God, ſo to influence his mind, and ſo to inſpire his
" ſpeech, that he might be enabled to plead to the ad-
" vantage and ſalvation of his ſoul. He then proceeded
" thus—I know, moſt learned judges, that many ex-
" cellent men have been moſt unworthily dealt with,
" overborne by falſe witneſses, and condemned by the
" moſt

" moſt unjuſt judgments. Illuſtrating this poſition by " particular inſtances, he began with Socrates, who was " unjuſtly condemned by his countrymen, and who could " not be perſuaded by the dread of the moſt formidable " evils, impriſonment and death, to avail himſelf of an " opportunity which was preſented to him of eſcaping out " of cuſtody. He then proceeded to mention the capti- " vity of Plato, the torments endured by Anaxagoras and " Zeno, and the unjuſt condemnations of many other " gentiles—the baniſhment of Rutilius, the unmerited " death of Boetius, and of others mentioned in the wri- " tings of that author. He then paſsed on to the inſtances " which are recorded in the Jewiſh hiſtory—and in the " firſt place, he obſerved, that Moſes, the deliverer and le- " giſlator of the Jews, was frequently calumniated by his " own countrymen, as a ſeducer and contemner of the " people. He alſo inſtanced Joſeph, who was ſold to " ſlavery, in conſequence of the envy of his brethren, " and afterwards impriſoned under a groundleſs ſuſpicion " of incontinence. Beſides theſe, he enumerated Iſaiah, " Daniel, and almoſt all the prophets, who were ca- " lumniated and perſecuted, as deſpiſers of God and " ſowers of ſedition. He alſo alluded to the trial of Su- " ſannah, and of many others, who, notwithſtanding " the integrity of their lives, periſhed by unjuſt ſen- " tences. Coming down to the time of John the Baptiſt " and our Saviour, he obſerved, that all are agreed that " they were unjuſtly condemned, upon falſe charges, " ſupported by falſe witneſses. He next quoted the

" caſe of Stephen, who was put to death by the prieſts;
" and reminded the aſsembly that all the apoſtles were
" condemned to die, as ſeditious movers of the people,
" contemners of the gods, and workers of iniquity. He
" maintained that it was a ſcandalous thing that one
" prieſt ſhould be unjuſtly condemned by another; that
" it was ſtill more ſcandalous, that a college of prieſts
" ſhould be guilty of this crime; and that it was moſt
" ſcandalous of all, that it ſhould be perpetrated by a
" general council. Nevertheleſs he proved from hiſtory
" that theſe circumſtances had actually occurred. Upon
" theſe topics he enlarged in ſo impreſsive a manner, that
" every body liſtened to him with fixed attention. But
" as the weight of every cauſe reſts upon the evidence
" by which it is ſupported, he proved, by various argu-
" ments, that no credit was due to the witneſses who
" depoſed againſt him, more eſpecially, as they were in-
" ſtigated to give evidence againſt him by hatred, ma-
" levolence, and envy. He then ſo ſatisfactorily detailed
" the cauſes of the hatred which he imputed to his pro-
" ſecutors, that he almoſt convinced his judges of the
" reaſonableneſs of his objections againſt their teſtimony.
" His obſervations were ſo weighty, that little credit
" would have been given to the depoſitions of the wit-
" neſses for the proſecution, in any other cauſe except in
" a trial for hereſy. He moreover added, that he had vo-
" luntarily come to the council, in order to defend his in-
" jured character, and gave an account of his life and ſtu-
" dies, which had been regulated by the laws of duty and

" of

" of virtue. He remarked, that holy men of old were ac-
" cuſtomed to diſcuſs their differences of opinion in mat-
" ters of belief, not with a view of impugning the faith,
" but of inveſtigating the truth—that St. Auguſtine and
" St. Jerome had thus differed in opinion, and had upon
" ſome points even held contrary ſentiments, without
" any ſuſpicion of hereſy. All the audience entertained
" hopes, that he would either clear himſelf by retracting
" the hereſies which were objected to him, or ſupplicate
" pardon for his errors. But he maintained that he had
" not erred, and that therefore he had nothing to retract.
" He next began to praiſe John Huſs, who had been
" condemned to the flames, calling him a good, juſt, and
" holy man, a man who had ſuffered death in a righteous
" cauſe. He profeſsed that he himſelf alſo was prepared
" to undergo the ſevereſt puniſhment with an undaunted
" and conſtant mind, declaring that he ſubmitted to his
" enemies, and to witneſses who had teſtified ſuch
" ſhameful falſehoods; who would however, on ſome
" future day, give an account of what they had ſaid, to
" a God who could not be deceived. When Jerome
" made theſe declarations, the aſsembly was affected
" with the greateſt ſorrow; for every body wiſhed, that
" a man of ſuch extraordinary talents ſhould repent of
" his errors and be ſaved. But he perſiſted in his ſenti-
" ments, and ſeemed to court deſtruction. Dwelling on
" the praiſes of John Huſs, he ſaid, that he had enter-
" tained no principles hoſtile to the conſtitution of the
" holy church, and that he only bore teſtimony againſt

" the

" the abuſes of the clergy, and the pride and pomp of
" prelates: for that ſince the patrimony of the church
" was appropriated firſt to the poor, then to ſtrangers,
" and laſtly to the erection of churches, good men
" thought it highly improper that it ſhould be laviſhed
" on harlots, entertainments, dogs, ſplendid garments,
" and other things unbecoming the religion of Chriſt.
" It may be mentioned as the greateſt proof of Jerome's
" abilities, that though he was frequently interrupted by
" various noiſes, and was teaſed by ſome people who
" cavilled at his expreſsions, he replied to them all, and
" compelled them either to blush or to be ſilent. When
" the clamour incommoded him, he ceaſed ſpeaking, and
" ſometimes reproved thoſe who diſturbed him. He
" then continued his ſpeech, begging and entreating
" them to ſuffer him to ſpeak, ſince this was the laſt time
" they would hear him. He was never terrified by the
" murmurs of his adverſaries, but uniformly maintained
" the firmneſs and intrepidity of his mind. It is a won-
" derful inſtance of the ſtrength of his memory, that
" though he had been confined three hundred and forty
" days in a dark dungeon, where it was impoſsible for
" him to read, and where he muſt have daily ſuffered
" from the utmoſt anxiety of mind, yet he quoted ſo
" many learned writers in defence of his opinions, and
" ſupported his ſentiments by the authority of ſo many
" doctors of the church, that any one would have been
" led to believe, that he had devoted all the time of his
" impriſonment to the peaceful and undiſturbed ſtudy of
" philoſophy.

" philoſophy. His voice was ſweet, clear and ſonorous;
" his action dignified, and well adapted either to expreſs
" indignation, or to excite compaſsion, which however
" he neither aſked or wiſhed for. He stood undaunted
" and intrepid, not merely contemning, but like another
" Cato, longing for death. He was a man worthy to
" be had in everlaſting remembrance. I do not com-
" mend him for entertaining ſentiments hoſtile to the
" conſtitution of the church; but I admire his learning,
" his extenſive knowledge, the ſuavity of his eloquence,
" and his ability in reply. But I am afraid that all theſe
" endowments were beſtowed on him by nature, in order
" to effect his deſtruction. As he was allowed two days
" for repentance, ſeveral learned men, and amongſt the
" reſt the cardinal of Florence, viſited him, with a view
" of perſuading him to change his ſentiments, and turn
" from the error of his ways. But as he pertinaciouſly
" perſiſted in his falſe notions, he was condemned as
" guilty of hereſy, and conſigned to the flames. No
" ſtoic ever ſuffered death with ſuch conſtancy of mind.
" When he arrived at the place of execution, he ſtripped
" himſelf of his garments, and knelt down before the
" ſtake, to which he was ſoon after tied with wet ropes
" and a chain. Then great pieces of wood, intermixed
" with ſtraw, were piled as high as his breaſt. When
" fire was ſet to the pile, he began to ſing a hymn, which
" was ſcarcely interrupted by the ſmoke and flame. I
" muſt not omit a ſtriking circumſtance, which ſhews
" the firmneſs of his mind. When the executioner was
" going

" going to apply the fire behind him, in order that he " might not ſee it, he ſaid, come this way, and kindle " it in my ſight, for if I had been afraid of it, I ſhould " never have come to this place. Thus periſhed a man, " in every reſpect exemplary, except in the erroneouſneſs " of his faith. I was a witneſs of his end, and obſerved " every particular of its proceſs. He may have been " heretical in his notions, and obſtinate in perſevering in " them, but he certainly died like a philoſopher. I have " rehearſed a long ſtory, as I wiſhed to employ my lei- " ſure, in relating a tranſaction which ſurpaſſes the " events of ancient hiſtory. For neither did Mutius " ſuffer his hand to be burnt ſo patiently as Jerome en- " dured the burning of his whole body; nor did Socrates " drink the hemlock as cheerfully as Jerome ſubmitted " to the fire." *(a)*

They who are admitted within the veil which hides the daily tranſactions of the great, from the profane eyes of the vulgar, rarely entertain an exceſsive reverence for dignities. From a variety of paſsages which occur in the works of Poggio, it is evident, that he was by no means inſenſible of the corruptions of the pontifical court; and on more occaſions than one, he drew upon himſelf the ſeverity of reproof, by the freedom with which he ex-

poſed

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 301—305.

poſed the vices of the clergy.*(a)* Whether his indignation againſt the diſgraceful conduct of the teachers of the catholic doctrine, had ſhaken his belief in the catholic creed, his prudence has rendered it impoſsible to aſcertain. It is certain, that he thought a reformation of the manners of eccleſiaſtics abſolutely neceſsary to the credit of the church; and though he was not inſpired by the zeal which prompted John Huſs, and Jerome of Prague, publicly to arraign the conduct of their eccleſiaſtical ſuperiors, let it be recorded to his honour, that he did not, as many have done, reprove and ridicule prevailing corruptions in private, and at the ſame time join in the perſecution of thoſe who had ſufficient courage to impugn the ſame corruptions by open hoſtility. The feeling manner in which he deſcribes the trial and execution of Jerome, evinces a heart, which daily intercourſe with bigoted believers, and licentious hypocrites, could not deaden to the impulſes of humanity. Indeed the manifeſt intereſt which he took in the fate of a man, who was held up by the church as an object of unqualified abhorrence,*(b)* awakened the

(a) See a letter from Poggio to Alberto di Sarzano, which is preserved in the collection of Ambrogio Traverſari's epiſtles, edited by Mehus *(lib.* xxv. *ep.* xxii.) in which he defends his ſtrictures on the immoralities of the clergy; his dialogue on hypocriſy, printed in the ſecond volume of the *Faſciculus Rerum expetend. et fugiend.*; his treatiſe on avarice; and many of his epiſtles.

(b) The ſentence paſſed by the council upon Jerome, concluded with the following declaration. "Propter quæ eadem ſancta ſynodus eundem Hieronymum palmitem putridum et aridum, in vite non manentem, foras mittendum

fears of Leonardo Aretino. Leonardo was undoubtedly apprehenſive, leſt admiration of the abilities, and compaſsion for the fate of the heretic, ſhould be attributed to a latent love of hereſy. He therefore thought it requiſite to admoniſh his friend in the following terms. "I received the day before yeſterday, by the medium of "Barbaro, your letter on the ſubject of the execution of "Jerome of Prague. I very much admire its elegance; "but you ſeem to give a more ample teſtimony to the "merits of the heretic than I could wiſh. You take "care indeed frequently to put in proper caveats; but "upon the whole, you ſhew too great an affection for "his cauſe. I muſt adviſe you henceforth to write "upon ſuch ſubjects in a more guarded manner." *(a)*

The cold caution of Leonardo may be a quality conducive to the enſurance of perſonal ſafety; but the generous warmth of Poggio, lays an irreſiſtible claim to the applauſe of every ingenuous mind.

"decernit: ipſumque hæreticum, et in hæreſim relapſum, excommunicatum, "anathematizatum pronunciat et declarat atque damnat."

Fasciculus Rer. Expet. et Fug. tom. i. *p.* 303.

(a) Leon. Aret. Epist. lib. iv. *ep.* x.

CHAP. III.

POGGIO receives a copy of Francesco Barbaro's treatise De Re Uxoriâ—Memoirs of Francesco Barbaro—Poggio's journey in quest of ancient manuscripts—Account of the ancient authors recovered by him—Death of Cardinal Zabarella—Poggio's oration pronounced at Zabarella's funeral—Account of Zabarella—Martin V. elected to the pontificate—Termination of the Schism—Dissolution of the council—Poggio attends the pontiff to Mantua—He visits England, at the instance of Beaufort bishop of Winchester—He is disappointed—State of literature in Britain—Several of Cicero's works recovered in Italy—Quarrel between Leonardo Aretino and Niccolo Niccoli—Poggio obtains a small benefice—He is still dissatisfied—He returns to Italy—Notices of the state of society in Britain which occur in his works.

CHAP. III.

SOON after the execution of Jerome of Prague, Poggio received from Guarino Veroneſe,*(a)* a copy of a treatiſe, *De Re Uxoriâ*, i. e. on the duties of a wife, which had been

(a) Guarino Veroneſe, as his ſirname imports, was a native of Verona, in which city he was born A. D. 1370. Dedicating himſelf to ſtudy from his early years, he became a pupil of John of Ravenna. Not contented with acquiring, under the inſtructions of this able tutor, a knowledge of the Latin language, he undertook a voyage to Conſtantinople for the expreſs purpoſe of reading the Greek claſſics in the ſchool of Manuel Cryſoloras. Ponticio Virunio, who flouriſhed in the beginning of the 16th. century, affirms, that when Guarino had finiſhed his Greek ſtudies, he returned to Italy with two large cheſts full of books which he had collected during his reſidence in Conſtantinople; and that he was ſo much affected by the loſs of one of theſe valuable packages, which periſhed in a ſhipwreck, that his hair became grey in the ſpace of a ſingle night. But this ſtory is generally conſidered as fabulous. On his return to his native country, he adopted the profeſſion of a public lecturer on Rhetoric, in which capacity he viſited various cities of Italy. The names of theſe cities are thus enumerated by Janus Pannonius, who teſtified his gratitude for the benefit

been lately publiſhed by Franceſco Barbaro, a Venetian ſcholar, who was now beginning to attain a conſiderable degree of celebrity. His opinion of this compoſition he expreſsed

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which he had derived from Guarino's inſtructions, by compoſing a poem to his praiſe.

" Tu mare frænantes Venetōs, tu Antenoris alti
" Inſtituis cives, tua te Verona legentem
" Finis et Italiæ ſtupuit ſublime Tridentum;
" Nec jam flumineum referens Florentia nomen,
" Ac Phæbo quondam, nunc ſacra Bononia Marti;
" Tandem manſurum placidâ ſtatione recepit
" Pacis et aligeri Ferraria mater amoris."

Ferrara was the laſt abode of Guarino. After having reſided many years in that city under the protection of the Marquis d'Eſte, he there terminated a life of literary labour, in the year 1460, at the advanced age of ninety. Bartolomæo Facio, who had been of the number of his pupils, made mention of him during his lifetime in the following flattering terms.

" Artem Rhetoricam profitetur, quâ in re ſupra quinque & triginta annos
" ſe exercuit. Ab hoc uno plures docti et eloquentes viri facti ſunt quam a ce-
" teris omnibus hujus ordinis, ut non immerito quidam de eo dixerit quod de
" Socrate dictum ferunt, plures ex ejus ſchola viros eruditos, quam ex equo
" Trojano milites prodiiſſe. Ejus quoque præſtantiæ ſingulare teſtimonium eſt
" Epigramma hoc nobile Antonii Panormitæ editum ab illo quum vita functum
" audiviſſet."

" Quantum Romulidæ ſanctum videre Catonem,
" Quantum Cepheni volitantem Perſea cœlo,
" Addidit Thebe pacantem viribus orbem,
" Tantum læta ſuum vidit Verona Guarinum."

Tiraboſchi Storia della Letter. Ital. tom. vi. p. 255 & ſeq.—Facius de Viris Illuſtr. p. 18.

expreſsed in the following terms. " I thank you, my " dear Guarino, for the little volume which you have " been ſo kind as to communicate to me. My obligation " to you would be immenſe, had I any thoughts of ma- " trimony; but I muſt acknowledge, that the peruſal of " this treatiſe has done away the little inclination which " I previouſly felt to enter into the married ſtate; for " how can I expect to find a help-mate who concen- " trates in her character all the good qualities, the union " of which, in the opinion of wiſe judges, conſtitutes a " good wife. But to be ſerious—As ſoon as I received " the book, I began to peruſe it; and found the ſubject " ſo novel, the ſtyle ſo excellent, and the method ſo " clear, that I haſtily ran over the whole in one day. I " afterwards read it again more deliberately. The ſub- " ject is indeed a pleaſant one; and he has illuſtrated it " by numerous and well arranged examples. I am how- " ever moſt of all captivated by the gravity of his dic- " tion. This diſsertation on the duty of a wife, is, in " my opinion, worthy to be claſsed with Tully's offices. " You know that I am no flatterer, but that I always " ſpeak from the impulſe of the heart. Barbaro unites " with the greateſt eloquence a dignity of ſentiment, " worthy of a man of conſummate gravity. Earneſtly " exhort him to cultivate thoſe talents, the firſt fruits " of which are ſo admirable." *(a)*

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(a) Poggii Opera, p. 305.

The warm approbation which Poggio expreſsed of this treatiſe *De Re Uxoriâ*, led the way to an intercourſe of mutual good offices between him and its author, in whoſe character were united the dignity of the patrician, and the accompliſhments of the ſcholar.

Franceſco Barbaro was deſcended from a noble Venetian family, which formerly bore the name of Magadeſi, but exchanged that appellation for the honourable title of Barbaro, or de' Barbari, which was conferred upon it in the twelfth century, in conſequence of the valorous exertions of Marco Magadeſi, in a battle fought againſt the Saracens, near Aſcalon. Franceſco was born at Venice, in the year 1398. At an early age he was placed under the tuition of John of Ravenna, and was afterwards entruſted to the care of Gaſperino Barziza.*(a)* Under the auſpices of theſe inſtructors he made a ſurpriſingly

(a) Gaſperino Barziza was a native of Bergamo, and was one of that numerous aſſemblage of ſcholars, who were indebted for their knowledge of the Latin tongue to John of Ravenna. He read lectures on Rhetoric, firſt at Padua, and afterwards at Milan. His writings are not numerous: they conſiſt of a treatiſe on Orthography, another on Elegance of Compoſition; various Orations and Letters; and a commentary on the Epiſtles of Seneca. In undertaking to ſupply the deficiencies which occurred in Cicero's treatiſe de Oratore, in conſequence of the mutilated condition of the ancient copies of that elegant and uſeful work, he evinced a temerity of ſpirit which nothing but the moſt able execution of his taſk could have juſtified. Happily however for the admirers of ancient eloquence, the labours of Gaſperino were rendered uſeleſs, by the diſcovery of a compleat copy of the work in queſtion, made by the Biſhop of Lodi. It appears however that he had actually enlarged, by ſupplementary chapters, the imperfect copies of

ingly rapid progreſs in the ſtudy of the Latin tongue. In the acquiſition of the rudiments of the Greek language, he was aſsiſted by Guarino Veroneſe, and not as ſome have erroneouſly ſuppoſed, by Manuel Cryſoloras. So ſuddenly did the talents of Franceſco come to maturity, that he made a public exhibition of his acquirements in the eighteenth year of his age, at which early period he pronounced the funeral eulogium of Giovanni Corradino, a phyſician of Padua, and alſo, at the command of the directors of the Paduan univerſity, delivered an oration on the occaſion of the conferring the degree of doctor of civil and canon law on Alberto Guidalotti, a noble Perugian. But a more ſingular inſtance of the precocity of his mind was diſplayed in the courſe of the ſame year, in the publication of his treatiſe *De Re Uxoriâ*, which was received by the learned with univerſal applauſe.*(a)*

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Quintilian's Institutes. Theſe were alſo ſuperſeded by the labours of Poggio, in ſearch of ancient manuſcripts.

Several of Gaſperino's letters were edited by Joſepho Aleſsandro Furietti, and publiſhed at Rome, in 4to. A. D. 1733.—*Mehi Vita Ambros. Travers. p.* xl. xlvi—*Agostini Scrittori Vinix. tom* 1. *p.* 20. *tom* 11. *p.* 8. *Facius de Viris illus. p.* 28.

(a) On the ſubject of matrimony, Franceſco did not confine himſelf to theoretical ſpeculations. Truſting that in Maria, daughter of Piero Loredano, procurator of St. Mark, he had found the union of good qualities which he had repreſented in his diſsertation, as requiſite to the formation of the character of a good wife, he married that lady in the year 1419.

So great was the reputation of his eloquence and prudence, that he had

The vacancy of the pontifical throne, ſtill affording to the officers of the Roman chancery a conſiderable degree of leiſure, Poggio about this time undertook an expedition

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ſcarcely attained to the age of twenty-one, when, notwithſtanding the prohibition of the Venetian law, he was admitted by the Concilio Maggiore into the number of the ſenators. Three years after his exaltation to this honour, he was appointed to the government of Como, which office, however, he did not think proper to accept. It does not appear what were the motives which induced him to decline this honour. His biographer Agoſtini, attributes his conduct in this inſtance to his modeſty. If this amiable virtue, a quality of ſuch rare occurrence in the hiſtory of ſtateſmen, prevented him from undertaking the chief magiſtracy of the city of Como, it ſhould ſeem, that it did not long continue to obſtruct him in his way to preferment, ſince in the ſame year in which he is ſuppoſed to have been thus diffident of his abilities, he ſuffered himſelf to be inveſted with the government of Trivigi, in which city he preſided for the ſpace of twelve months. The inhabitants of Trivigi lamented his departure, and long entertained a reſpectful remembrance of the wiſdom of his adminiſtration. At the expiration of twenty-four years after the termination of his government, they applied for his advice in the choice of a public preceptor; and on this occaſion, Franceſco aſsured them, that he should always regard their welfare as an object of his particular attention. Immediately after his return to the Venetian capital, he was appointed, in conjunction with Leonardo Giuſtiniano, to compliment the eaſtern emperor Palæologus on his arrival in Venice. In the execution of this commiſsion, he pronounced a Greek oration with ſuch elegance and purity of ſtile and diction, that, as a contemporary writer affirms, "He ſeemed "to have been educated in the ſchool of Homer." Early in the year 1424, he was nominated to the præfecture of Vicenza. On his acceſsion to this office, he found the laws of that city in ſuch a ſtate of confuſion, that he deemed it abſolutely neceſsary to reduce them to order and conſiſtency. With the aſsiſtance of a committee of Vicentians, appointed for that purpoſe, and of Antonio Luſco, a celebrated civilian, he happily accompliſhed this difficult and delicate undertaking. Franceſco was alſo the means of conferring upon the citizens of Vicenza another public benefit, in inducing George of Trebiſond, whom he had invited from his native iſland Candia, to Italy, to ſettle amongſt them, in quali-

tion of no small importance to the intereſts of literature. Having received information that many ancient manuſcripts of claſsic authors were ſcattered in various monaſ-

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ty of profeſſor of the Greek language. In the year 1426, he was ſent by the Venetian ſeignory to Rome, inveſted with the office of embaſſador extraordinary at the pontifical court. The object of his miſsion was to perſuade Martin V. to enter into an alliance with his countrymen againſt the duke of Milan, with whom the Venetians were then at war. The pontiff, as became the common father of the faithful, interpoſed his good offices between the contending powers; and after encountering a variety of difficulties, he at length had the ſatisfaction of aſſembling a congreſs at Ferrara, which terminated, April 18th, 1428, in the ſigning of a definitive treaty of peace between the Venetians and their adverſary. At this congreſs, Franceſco aſsiſted as one of the deputies of his republic.

In the courſe of the war, the Venetians had taken the city of Bergamo. Of this newly acquired poſſeſsion, Franceſco Barbaro adminiſtered the government in 1430. On the expiration of this office, he was raiſed to the dignity of counſellor, and in the year 1433, he was elected by the Venetian government as a member of the embaſsy of honour, which they deputed to attend the emperor Sigiſmund, who purpoſed to travel through the ſtates of the republic, on his way to the city of Baſil, where the general council was then aſsembled. On this occaſion, the Venetian envoys received from the emperor the honour of knighthood. So great was the eſteem which Sigiſmund had conceived of the good qualities of Barbaro, that, with the permiſsion of the ſeignory, he diſpatched him into Bohemia upon the difficult errand of ſoothing the irritation, and abating the zeal of the confederated heretics. Nor was this the only inſtance of the truſt repoſed in the fidelity of Franceſco by foreign princes. On his return from Germany he was employed by Eugenius IV. in conducting a negociation with the emperor. His reputation being encreaſed by theſe ſtriking teſtimonies to his merits, in the year 1434 he was appointed to the important and honourable government of Verona. In this ſtation he conducted himſelf with his wonted wiſdom, and conſequently gained the eſteem and affection of his ſubjects. Soon after the expiration of the term of his new government, he was diſpatched

teries, and other repoſitories in the neighbourhood of Conſtance, where they were ſuffered to periſh in neglected obſcurity, he determined to reſcue theſe precious relics from

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to Florence, on an embaſsy to Eugenius IV. who then held his court in that city. During this viſit to Florence, the following circumſtance took place, which is related by Maffei as a proof of the patience and forbearance of his temper. The ſteward of his houſehold, having been reproved by his nephew Daniello Barbaro, was ſo much irritated, that he drew his ſword, and attacked the youth with an intention of killing him. Daniello complained of this outrage to his uncle. Franceſco ſent for the offender, who vented his rage in the moſt violent and indecent reproaches againſt his maſter. The byeſtanders trembled for the life of the ſteward, when, to their aſtoniſhment, Franceſco thus addreſsed him, "Begone, and act more prudently in future; I would not "wiſh that your faults ſhould make me loſe that patience, of which, luckily "for you, I am now poſseſsed."

In the year 1437, Franceſco was appointed governor of Breſcia. In the diſcharge of the duties of this office, he was obliged to call into exerciſe the full vigour of his abilities. At the time of his appointment the Venetians were at war with the duke of Milan, whoſe general, Piccinino, menaced their weſtern borders with a powerful army; and in the month of September encamped before Breſcia. On Franceſco's arrival in that city he had found it torn by faction, and ſcantily furniſhed with proviſions. But by his prudent exertions he had reconciled the contending families, and had uſed the moſt ſtrenuous exertions to provide the place with the neceſsary ſupplies. Encouraged by his example, the inhabitants repelled the attacks of the enemy with great valour, and patiently endured the evils of famine and peſtilence, conſequent upon their being for the ſpace of three months cloſely confined within the walls of the town. At length, in the month of December, they had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing the Milaneſe forces retire. In gratitude for Franceſco's ſtrenuous exertions in their defence, the inhabitants of Breſcia preſented him with a banner ornamented with the armorial bearings of their city; and when he returned to Venice, to give the ſeignory an account of the events of his adminiſtration, the Breſcian

from the hands of the barbarians, who were ſo little ſenſible of their value. He was not deterred from this laudable deſign by the inclemency of the ſeaſon, or by the

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deputies detailed his ſervices to that auguſt aſſembly in the moſt flattering terms.

He was afterwards called to the diſcharge of various other public offices, in which he acquitted himſelf in ſuch a manner as to obtain univerſal commendation. A moſt unequivocal teſtimony to his honour and intelligence occurred, A. D. 1444, when he was choſen by the inhabitants of Verona and Vicenza as umpire to ſettle a diſpute which had ariſen between thoſe communities about the limits of their reſpective territories. Having paſsed through all the inferior offices of the ſtate, on the 5th of January, 1452, he received what he regarded as an ample reward of his labours, in being elected procurator of St. Mark. Two years after his exaltation to this diſtinguiſhed honour, his earthly career of glory was terminated by his death, which event took place towards the end of January, 1454.

His remains were interred in the church of Santa Maria Glorioſa, and the following inſcription marks the ſpot where his body is depoſited.

" Si quis honos, si fas lacrymis decorare ſepultos,
" Flete ſuper tumulum, meſtiſque replete querelis.
" Franciſcus, cui priſca parem vix ſecla tulerunt,
" Barbarus hic ſitus eſt; linguæ decus omne Latinæ.
" Fortia facta viri pro libertate Senatûs
" Brixia, quam magno tenuit ſudore, fatetur.
" Hic ſummi ingenii, ſcriptis, monumenta reliquit;
" Græcaque præterea fecit Romana. Tenet nunc
" Spiritus aſtra; ſacros tumulus complectitur artus."

The life of this illuſtrious ſcholar was ſo much occupied by active purſuits, that the catalogue of his writings is neceſsarily ſhort. The following productions of his pen are ſtill extant.

the ruinous ſtate of the roads; but with an induſtry and perſeverance, which cannot be too highly applauded, he made ſeveral excurſions to the places which were ſaid to contain

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1. *Francisci Barbari, Veneti, pro insigni Viro Joannino Conradino Veneto Physico Epitaphios Logos.* Manuſcript copies of this oration were preſerved in the Dominican monaſtery of S. Nicolò, in Trivigi, and in the library of Apoſtolo Zeno.

2. *Francisci Barbari Veneti Laudatio in Albertum Guidalotum cum eum in Academiâ Patavinâ J. V. laureâ decoraret.* This oration was publiſhed by Bernardo Pez, in a collection entitled *Thesaurus novissimus Anecdotorum.*

3. *Francisci Barbari Veneti ad insignem Laurentium de Medicis Florentinum de Re Uxoriâ Liber.* The autograph of this treatiſe is preſerved in the Medicean library at Florence; an early edition of it, of uncertain date, was printed at Antwerp. In the year 1513, it was printed at Paris, in 4to. *in ædibus Ascensianis.* In 1533 it was printed at Hagenau, in 8vo. A duodecimo edition was published at Straſbourg, in 1612; and another in the ſame form at Amsterdam, by John Janſon, in 1639. This treatise was twice tranſlated into the French language, firſt by Martin du Pin, and afterwards by Claude Joly. A beautiful M.S. copy of the original Latin is preserved in the Cheetham library, in Manchester.

4. *Eloquentissimi, ac Patricii viri Francisci Barbari Veneti Vitæ Aristidis, & Majoris Catonis a Plutarcho conscriptæ, e Græco in Latinum versæ.* This tranſlation was printed in an edition of Plutarch's lives, publiſhed at Venice, by Nicolas Jenſon, A. D. 1478, in folio; and in the Baſil folio edition of the ſame work, printed by Bebelius in 1535. In Jenſon's edition, the verſion of the life of Ariſtides is erroneouſly aſcribed to Leonardo Aretino.

5. *Oratio Clariss. Viri Francisci Barbari ad Sigismundum Cæsarem pro Republicâ Venetâ acta Ferrariæ.* Agoſtini has printed this oration in his *Istoria degli Scrittori Viniziani,* after a MS. copy belonging to Marco Foſcarini.

contain the objects of his research. His inquiries were not fruitless. A great number of manuscripts, some of which contained portions of classic authors, which the admirers of ancient learning had hitherto sought for in vain, were the reward of his literary zeal. The scholars of Italy took

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6. *Oratio Francisci Barbari Patricii Veneti, habita, anno* 1438, *in templo Sanctorum Faustini et Jovitæ dum civitatis Brixiensis Magistratum iniret.* This oration is to be found in Pez's Thesaurus.

7. *Francisci Barbari P. V. Apologia ad Mediolanenses pro populo Brixiensi, anno* 1439. A MS. copy of this work is preserved in the Vatican library.

8. *Oratio Francisci Barbari P. V. ad Populum Brixiensem in renunciatione illius Civitatis.* This is in fact a report of an extempore speech of Francesco's, composed from memory by Manelli, in whose Commentaries it is printed.

9. *Francisci Barbari, et aliorum ad ipsum Epistolæ ab anno Christi* 1425, *ad annum* 1453, *nunc primum editæ ex duplici MS. Cod. Brixiano & Vaticano uno &c. Brixiæ excudebat Joannes Maria Rizzardi,* 1743, *in Quarto magno.* This collection of Francesco's epistles, which was edited by cardinal Quirini, contains 284 of his letters, besides 94 addressed to him by various correspondents. In the learned dissertation prefixed to this publication, the cardinal has quoted at length fourteen other epistles of Barbaro.

10. *Francisci Barbari viri illustris. pro Flavio Forliviensi pro Proemio descriptionis Italiæ illustratæ. Ad Alphonsum Serenissimum Arragonum Regem.* Cardinal Quirini, in the abovementioned dissertation, has printed this præfatory essay, which was written by Barbaro, in the name of Flavio Biondo.

11. *Epitaphium clarissimi viri Francisci Barbari Veneti in laudem Gathamelatæ Imperatoris Gentis Venetorum.* This epitaph Agostini has published in his *Istoria degli Scrittori Viniziani,* from a MS. preserved in the Guarnerian library in Friuli.

Agostini Istoria degli Scrittori Vinizani, tom ii. *p.* 28—134.

took a lively intereſt in theſe inveſtigations of their learned countryman. The noble art of printing has in modern times rendered books ſo eaſily acceſsible to all ranks of men, that we cannot enter into the feelings of thoſe whoſe libraries were ſcantily furniſhed with volumes, which were ſlowly multiplied by the tedious proceſs of tranſcription. But the epiſtolary correſpondence of the ſtudious of the fifteenth century, contains frequent and ſtriking intimations of the value which was then ſet upon good modern copies of the works of claſsic writers. It may therefore be eaſily preſumed, that the diſcovery of an ancient manuſcript was a common ſubject of exultation to all the lovers of the polite arts. In the following letter from Leonardo Aretino to Poggio, congratulating him on the ſucceſs of his expedition, and particularly on his acquiſition of a perfect copy of Quintilian's treatiſe on Oratory, the writer ſpeaks the ſentiments of the literary characters of the age.

" I have ſeen the letter which you wrote to our " friend Niccolo, on the ſubject of your laſt journey, " and the diſcovery of ſome manuſcripts. In my opi- " nion the republic of letters has reaſon to rejoice, not " only on account of the acquiſition of the works which " you have already recovered, but alſo on account of the " hope which I ſee you entertain of the recovery of " others. It will be your glory to reſtore to the preſent " age, by your labour and diligence, the writings of ex- " cellent authors, which have hitherto eſcaped the re-

" ſearches

" ſearches of the learned. The accompliſhment of your
" undertaking will confer an obligation, not on us alone,
" but on the ſucceſsors to our ſtudies. The memory of
" your ſervices will never be obliterated. It will be re-
" corded to diſtant ages, that theſe works, the loſs of
" which had been for ſo long a period a ſubject of lamen-
" tation to the friends of literature, have been recovered
" by your induſtry. As Camillus on account of his having
" rebuilt the city of Rome, was ſtiled its ſecond founder,
" ſo you may be juſtly denominated the ſecond author of
" all thoſe pieces which are reſtored to the world by your
" meritorious exertions. I therefore moſt earneſtly ex-
" hort you not to relax in your endeavours to proſecute
" this laudable deſign. Let not the expenſe which you
" are likely to incur, diſcourage you from proceeding. I
" will take care to provide the neceſsary funds. I have
" the pleaſure of informing you, that from this diſcovery
" of yours, we have already derived more advantage than
" you ſeem to be aware of; for by your exertions we
" are at length in poſſeſsion of a perfect copy of Quin-
" tilian. I have inſpected the titles of the books. We
" have now the entire treatiſe, of which, before this
" happy diſcovery, we had only one half, and that in a
" very mutilated ſtate. Oh what a valuable acquiſition!
" What an unexpected pleaſure! Shall I then behold
" Quintilian whole and entire, who, even in his imper-
" fect ſtate, was ſo rich a ſource of delight? I entreat
" you, my dear Poggio, ſend me the manuſcript as ſoon as
" poſsible, that I may ſee it before I die. As to Aſconius

" and Flaccus, I am glad that you have recovered them, " though neither of theſe authors have conferred any " additional grace on Latin literature. But Quintilian " is ſo conſummate a maſter of rhetoric and oratory, that " when, after having delivered him from his long im- " priſonment in the dungeons of the barbarians, you " tranſmit him to this country, all the nations of Italy " ought to aſſemble to bid him welcome. I cannot but " wonder that you and your friends did not eagerly take " him in hand, and that, employing yourſelves in the " tranſcription of inferior writers, you ſhould have ne- " glected Quintilian—an author, whoſe works I will not " heſitate to affirm, are more an object of deſire to the " learned than any others, excepting only Cicero's diſ- " ſertation *De Republicâ*. I muſt next admonish you " not to waſte your time on the works which we already " poſſeſs, but to ſearch for thoſe which we have not, " eſpecially the works of Cicero and Varro." *(a)*

Dec. 16th. A. D. 1416.

Poggio was far from being unconſcious of the good ſervice which he had done to the cauſe of letters, by the ſucceſsful aſsiduity of his reſearches after the loſt writers of antiquity. On the ſixteenth of December of this year, he wrote to Guarino Veroneſe an epiſtle, in which, after duly extolling the importance and agreeable nature of the intelligence which he was about to announce, he gave

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(a) Leonardi Aretini Epiſtolæ. l. iv. *ep.* v.

gave him a particular account of the treaſure which he had lately brought to light. From this letter it appears, (a) that in conſequence of information which Poggio had received, that a conſiderable number of books were depoſited in the monaſtery of St. Gall, he took a journey to that town, accompanied by ſome of his friends. There they found a large number of manuſcripts, and among the reſt a complete copy of Quintilian, buried in rubbiſh and duſt. For the books in queſtion were not arranged in a library, but were thrown into the loweſt apartment or dungeon of a tower, "Which," ſays Poggio, "was not even a fit reſidence for a condemned cri-"minal." Beſides Quintilian, they found in this obſcure receſs, the three firſt, and one half of the fourth books of the Argonautics of Valerius Flaccus, and Aſconius Pedianus's comment on eight of Cicero's orations. The two latter manuſcripts Poggio himſelf tranſcribed, with an intention of ſending them to Leonardo Aretino, who, as appears by his letter quoted above, was ſo much elated by the revival of Quintilian, that he ſpeaks of the diſcovery of Aſconius and Flaccus as a matter of comparatively trifling moment. (b)

(a) This letter from Poggio to Guarino Veroneſe is printed by L'Enfant, in the ſupplement to the ſecond volume of his *Poggiana*, from a M.S. in the Wolfenbuttle library. *See Poggiana, tom.* ii. *p.* 309.

(b) Mehus is of opinion that the copy of Quintilian, thus found by Poggio, is preſerved in the Laurentian library.

Præfatio ad vitam Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. xxxiv.

Poggio zealouſly concurred in the wiſh of his friend Leonardo, to reſcue from obſcurity the loſt works of Cicero. Nor were his endeavours to accompliſh this valuable object entirely unſucceſsful. In a monaſtery of the monks of Clugny, in the town of Langres, he found a copy of Cicero's Oration for Cæcina, of which he made a tranſcript for the uſe of his Italian friends. In the courſe of various journies, which the viciſſitudes of fortune obliged him to take at different periods of his life, he had the ſatisfaction to diſcover the following orations of the ſame author, the loſs of which had been long deplored by the learned—De lege Agrariâ contra Rullum liber primus—Ejusdem liber ſecundus—Contra legem Agrariam ad populum—In L. Piſonem. A copy of these orations is preſerved in the Abbey of Santa Maria, at Florence, to which is affixed a memorandum, which records the fact of their having been diſcovered by Poggio. This memorandum indeed makes mention of ſeven orations as having been found by him in France and Germany; and the catalogue prefixed to the manuſcript, beſides the works abovementioned, enumerates the Oration pro C. Rabirio Piſone—Pro C. Rabirio perduellionis reo—and pro Roſcio Comœdo—but theſe orations have been torn from the volume in question.*(a)* With the aſsiſtance of Bartolomeo di Montepulciano, Poggio also restored to light the poem of Silius Italicus—Lactantius's treatiſe de

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(a) Mehi Præfatio ad vitam Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. xxxv. xxxvi.

irâ Dei et opificio hominis—Vegetius de re Militari—Nonius Marcellus—Ammianus Marcellinus*(a)*—Lucretius,*(b)* Columella and Tertullian.*(c)*

Before the time of Poggio, eight only of the comedies of Plautus were known to the claſsical ſtudent. But by the induſtry or good fortune of one Nicolas of Treves, whom Poggio employed in continuing the reſearches in the monaſteries of Germany, which he was unable to conduct in perſon, twelve more were brought to light. When Poggio had notice of this diſcovery, he was highly elated, and ſtrenuouſly exhorted the cardinal Urſini to diſpatch a truſty meſsenger to bring theſe valuable treaſures to Rome.

" I was

(a) The manuſcript of this author was ſent by Poggio to Martin V. who permitted Niccolo Niccoli to tranſcribe it. Niccolo's tranſcript is preſerved in the Marcian library at Florence.

Mehi Præfat. p. xxxvii. xxxviii.

(b) Poggio tranſmitted his newly recovered copy of Lucretius, to Niccolo Niccoli, who, with his uſual diligence, made with his own hand a tranſcript of it, which is yet extant in the Laurentian library.

Mehi Præfat. p. xxxviii.

(c) Poggio found this copy of Tertullian in a monaſtery of the monks of Clugny at Rome. By ſome means the cardinal Urſini got poſſeſsion of it, and moroſely locked it up from the inſpection of the learned. At the inſtance of Lorenzo de' Medicis, however, he ſuffered the manuſcript to be tranſported to Florence, where it was copied, firſt by Ambrogio Traverſari, and afterwards by Niccolo Niccoli. The tranſcript of Niccolo is lodged in the library of St. Mark.

Mehi Præfatio. p. xxxix.

" I was not only ſolicitous, but importunate, with his " eminence," ſays Poggio in a letter to Niccolo Niccoli, " to ſend ſomebody for the books." The cardinal did not however ſecond the impatience of the Italian literati, who waited nearly two years before the manuſcripts in queſtion arrived in Rome, whither they were brought by Nicolas of Treves himſelf. *(a)*

Beſides Plautus's comedies, Nicolas of Treves brought to Rome a fragment of Aulus Gellius.

Poggio alſo found a copy of Julius Frontinus de Aquæductis.

(a) The volume which Nicolas of Treves thus conveyed from Germany, contained, beſides four comedies which had been already recovered, the following twelve, which had been till then unknown, Bacchides, Moſtellaria, Menæchmi, Miles glorioſus, Mercator, Pſeudolus, Poenulus, Perſa, Rudens, Stichus, Trinummus, Truculentus—This volume was ſeized by cardinal Urſini, who would not permit Poggio to take a copy of it. Poggio highly reſented the illiberality of the cardinal's conduct. " I have not been able," ſays he, addreſsing himſelf to Niccolo Niccoli, " to get poſſeſsion of Plautus. Before the cardinal's depar- " ture, I begged him to ſend you the book, but he refuſed to comply with my " requeſt. I do not underſtand what the man means. He ſeems to think that " he has done ſomething great, though in fact he has not had the leaſt partici- " pation in the diſcovery of the book. It was found by another, but it is hid- " den by him. I told both him and his people, that I would never again aſk " him for the book, and I ſhall be as good as my word. I had rather unlearn " what I have learnt, than acquire any knowledge by means of his books." By the interpoſition of Lorenzo de Medicis, however, the cardinal was induced to entruſt the volume to Niccolo Niccoli, who copied it, and returned it to the Cardinal. Niccolo's copy is depoſited in the Marcian library.

Mehi Præfatio. p. xl—xliii.

ductis, and eight books of Firmicus's treatiſe on the mathematics, lying neglected and forgotten in the archives of the monaſtery of Monte Caſsino; and at the inſtance of Niccolo Niccoli he prevailed upon the governors of that religious houſe, to allow him to convey theſe manuſcripts to his own reſidence, for the purpoſe of decyphering and copying them. After he had tranſcribed Frontinus with his own hand, he returned the original manuſcript to the library where it had been diſcovered.*(a)* He alſo procured from Cologne the fifteenth book of Petronius Arbiter, a ſmall fragment of which author he had before diſcovered in Britain. By his exertions alſo the entire work of Columella was brought to light, of which only fragments had been known to the earlier ſcholars. For the preſervation of Calpurnius's Bucolic alſo, the republic of letters is indebted to the ſagacious diligence of Poggio.*(b)*

In

(a) Joannes Polenus, who publiſhed an elegant edition of Frontinus de Aquæductis at Padua in the year 1722, procured a tranſcript of this manuſcript, which was ſtill preſerved in the monaſtery of Monte Caſsino, and which he found to be much more correct than any printed editions of Frontinus's treatiſe. It is in the form of a quarto volume, written on parchment, and, as appears from a fac ſimile of the firſt ten or twelve lines, in a very legible character. From the form of the letters, Polenus conjectures that it was written at the end of the thirteenth, or the beginning of the fourteenth century.

Prolegomena ad Poleni editionem Frontini de Aquæductis, p. 19, 20.

Mention is made of this manuſcript by Mabillion, in his *Museum Italicum, tom.* i. *p.* 123.

(b) Mehi Prefatio, p. xlviii, xlix.

In a long and elaborate letter which Poggio received from Franceſco Barbaro, and which bears the date of June 7th, 1417, this learned patrician congratulates his correſpondent on the glory which he had acquired by his labours in the cauſe of learning, and aſcribes to the unremitted diligence of his inveſtigations, the recovery of the works of the following authors, in addition to others which have been already enumerated; Manilius, Lucius Septimius, Caper, Eutychius, and Probus. From this letter of Barbaro, it appears, that the republic of letters had expected that Poggio would have been materially aſsiſted in his inquiries after the relics of ancient literature, by Bartolomeo di Montepulciano, but that in conſequence of the ill ſtate of his aſsociate's health, he was under the neceſsity of taking upon himſelf almoſt the entire conduct and trouble of the reſearch.

The expenſe occaſioned by theſe literary excurſions was a heavy incumbrance upon Poggio, whoſe property could by no means bear any extraordinary diminution: and the fatigue and inconvenience which he experienced in the courſe of his travels in queſt of manuſcripts, induced him at one time to declare to Niccolo Niccoli that he could not poſsibly ſpend more time in this purſuit.(a) This

(a) *Ambroſii Traverſarii Opera, tom.* ii. *p.* 285. To the decline of life Poggio retained a conſiderable degree of indignation, which was at this time excited in his mind, by the indifference with which his labours to recover the loſt writers of antiquity were regarded by the great. In the introduction to his

This declaration was however nothing more than the reſult of a temporary dejection of ſpirits. During the remainder of his life he eagerly took advantage of every opportunity of recovering the loſt writers of antiquity. In ſeveral of his letters, the zeal with which he endeavoured to procure good copies of the Latin claſsics, is ſtrikingly conſpicuous. His inquiries were inceſsantly and anxiouſly directed after the ancient compoſitions which had not yet been reſcued from beneath the ruins of ages. In the courſe of his inveſtigations, he once entertained hopes of recovering the loſt Decads of Livy. A Swede, of the name of Nicolaus, had ſolemnly aſsured him that he had ſeen a perfect copy of Livy's Roman hiſtory, in a monaſtery of Ciſtercian monks in Hungary. On the receipt of this intelligence, he immediately applied by letter to Niccolo Niccoli, not doubting but that he could perſuade Coſmo de' Medicis to diſpatch one Gherardo de' Buris to the monaſtery where the manuſcript was ſaid to

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dialogue, *De Infelicitate Principum*, he puts the following ſtrictures on their conduct into the mouth of Niccolo Niccoli—" When many of the ancient " claſsics had been brought to light by our friend Poggio, and there was a moſt " flattering proſpect of the recovery of others of ſtill greater conſequence, no " ſovereign prince or pontiff contributed in the leaſt degree to the liberation of " thoſe moſt excellent authors, from the priſons of the barbarians. Theſe ex- " alted perſonages ſpend their days and their money in pleaſures, in unworthy " purſuits, in peſtiferous and deſtructive wars. So great is their mental tor- " pidity, that nothing can rouſe them to ſearch after the works of excellent " writers, by whoſe wiſdom and learning mankind are taught the way to true " felicity."

Poggii Opera, p. 394.

be depoſited. He was alſo in hopes that cardinal Urſini would ſend a confidential agent to procure this valuable work; but in theſe expectations he was diſappointed.*(a)* The teſtimony of Nicolaus the Swede being a few years afterwards corroborated by another traveller, Poggio wrote a letter to Leonello d'Eſte, Marquis of Ferrara, giving him an account of the information which he had received, and intimating, that though the authority upon which it reſted was not of the higheſt nature, ſtill it was worthy of attention. Whether Leonello was induced by Poggio's letter to inſtitute any inquiry after the manuſcript in queſtion, cannot perhaps now be aſcertained. Certain it is, that the learned ſtill lament the imperfect ſtate of the hiſtory of Livy.*(b)*

Poggio had alſo at one time conceived hopes of obtaining from a German monk a copy of the works of Tacitus, containing many portions of that hiſtorian's writings, which had till then lain neglected beneath the accumulated duſt of ages. Theſe hopes were likewiſe fruſtrated. By the courſe of events however it was afterwards proved, that they were not void of foundation; for during the pontificate of Leo X. an ancient manuſcript containing five books of the hiſtory of Tacitus, which had been long regarded as irrecoverably loſt, was found in

(a) *Mehi Præfatio, p.* xlvi. xlvii.

(b) *Poggii Epiſtolæ* lvii. *ep.* xxx.

in Germany, and preſented to that pontiff, according to whoſe directions it was depoſited in the Laurentian library at Florence.*(a)*

Amongſt the literary characters whoſe applauſe animated Poggio to perſevere in his reſearches after the loſt writers of antiquity, a place of diſtinguiſhed honour is due to Ambrogio Traverſari. This learned eccleſiaſtic was the ſon of Bencivenni dei Traverſari, and was born on the 16th of September, 1386, in Portico, a town of Romagna. His biographers are not agreed whether his family was poor or rich, plebeian, or noble.*(b)* It appears however from inconteſtible evidence, that ſoon after he had completed his fourteenth year, he was admitted into the Camaldoleſe convent *Degli Angioli*, at Florence, and that he there took the monaſtic vows, on the ſixth day of November, 1401. At the time of his entrance into this religious ſeminary, it was governed by Matteo di Guido, a Florentine, who, happily for the welfare of the eccleſiaſtical fraternity committed to his care, tem-

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(a) Mehi Præfatio, p. xlvii.

(b) Mehus, on the authority of one Veſpaſiano di Filippo, ſays, that he was born of poor parents. The author of his life, in the *Elogi degli Illustri uomini Toscani*, maintains, on the contrary, that his family was graced with the honours of nobility; and he ſupports his poſition by very cogent arguments. Theſe different ſtatements may be reconciled by an hypotheſis by no means devoid of probability, namely, that the father of Ambrogio was deſcended of noble blood, but that the fortunes of his houſe were fallen to decay.

pered the ſeverity, and beguiled the weariſomneſs of the cloiſtered life, by the ſtudy of polite letters. Kindly deſirous of communicating to others the pleaſure which he himſelf experienced in literary purſuits, he perſonally ſuperintended the education of the youths whom puerile enthuſiaſm, or parental authority, had ſecluded from the world within the walls of his monaſtery. Under the care of this enlightened ſuperior, Ambrogio continued his Latin ſtudies, which he had commenced under the guidance of John of Ravenna. In the Greek language he was inſtructed by Demetrius Scaranus, an eminent ſcholar, whom the alarming inroads of the Turks had cauſed to fly from Conſtantinople, and who was induced by the liberality of Matteo to read lectures on the Grecian claſsics, in the cloiſters of his convent.*(a)* As Ambrogio was actuated by the genuine enthuſiaſm of literary zeal, he made a rapid progreſs in knowledge. In the proſecution of his ſtudies indeed he enjoyed peculiar advantages. The retirement of the monaſtic life afforded him conſiderable leiſure. The library of his convent was well furniſhed with books, and he had moreover the free uſe of the copious collection of Niccolo Niccoli, who regarded him with parental affection, and aſsiduouſly foſtered his ripening talents by the moſt liberal patronage. Inſpired

(a) Demetrius was ſo much pleaſed with the reſpectful attention which he received from his Camaldoleſe pupils, that he became a member of their fraternity in the year 1416.

Mehi Vita Ambros. Travers. p. ccclxv.

Inſpired by a profound veneration of the models of juſt taſte, which are to be found in the writings of antiquity, he aſsiduouſly employed a conſiderable portion of his time in multiplying the copies of the claſsic authors: and his elegant tranſcripts of the works which Poggio had reſcued from obſcurity, at once teſtified his love of literature, and the high eſtimation in which he held the labours of his friend.*(a)*

After the depoſition of John XXII. Poggio ſtill remained at Conſtance, anxiouſly hoping that the appointment of a ſucceſsor to that ill fated pontiff, would enable him once more to eſtabliſh himſelf in the Roman chancery. In the proſecution of his intereſts, he had great dependance upon the ſupport and patronage of Zabarella, cardinal of Florence. But his expectations of preferment from this quarter were unfortunately deſtroyed by the death of that illuſtrious eccleſiaſtic. This event, which occurred on the twenty-ſixth of September, 1417, deprived the council of one of its ableſt members, and Poggio of a kind and zealous friend. The obſequies of Zabarella were celebrated with extraordinary pomp; and on this occaſion, Poggio fulfilled the laſt duties of friendſhip, by commemorating his virtues in a funeral oration. Impreſsed by the ſolemnity of the ſubject, and the dignity of

Sept. 26th. A. D. 1417.

(a) Elogi degli uomini illus. Toscani, tom. i. *p.* cccxl. *Mehi Vita Ambros. Travers. p.* ccclxiv. *& seq. Ejusdem Præfatio ad Colucii Salutati Epistolas, p.* xli.

of his audience, he exerted in the compoſition of this oration the full powers of his eloquence and learning. After a modeſt exordium, he proceeded to give a brief account of the life of his departed friend—he then entered into the detail of his good qualities, and concluded by an impaſsioned burſt of ſorrow for the loſs which the lovers of union and peace had ſuſtained; and an exhortation to the aſsembled dignitaries to pay to their deceaſed brother the honours due to his virtues, and to imitate the moral graces which they had ſo much admired in his conduct.

Franceſco Zabarella was a native of Padua. His parents, who moved in the ſuperior circles of ſociety, readily indulged his early love of literature, and procured him the beſt inſtructions which their city could afford. Having finiſhed his preparatory education, Franceſco applied himſelf to the ſtudy of the civil law, tempering the ſeverity of this purſuit by the cultivation of polite letters. When he was arrived at years of maturity, he delivered public lectures on the ſcience of juriſprudence. In diſcharging the duty of inſtruction, he gained the reſpect and love of his pupils, by the variety of his knowledge and the benevolence of his diſpoſitions. The celebrity which he acquired by the ability with which he filled the profeſsor's chair, attracted the notice of John XXII, who, without any ſolicitation on his part, nominated him to the biſhopric of Florence, and afterwards raiſed him to the dignity of cardinal. Stimulated by an earneſt

deſire

deſire to put an end to the ſchiſm, he ſucceſsfully exerted his influence with the pontiff to induce him to aſsent to the wiſhes of the emperor of Germany, by ſummoning a general council; and being deputed on the part of the pope, to confer with the repreſentatives of Sigiſmund, concerning the place where the council ſhould aſsemble, he concurred with them in fixing, for that purpoſe, upon the city of Conſtance. He entered with great zeal into the diſcuſsion of the various ſubjects which engaged the attention of that renowned ſynod. The ardour of his mind indeed haſtened his end. Engaging with uncommon warmth in a tumultuous debate, at a time when he was languid with ſickneſs, he found himſelf ſo much exhauſted, that making a laſt effort, he declared, that the ſpeech which he had juſt concluded was his teſtamentary oration, and that he felt himſelf dying in defence of the unity of the church. He did not long ſurvive this exertion. After a ſhort reſidence at the baths of Baden, which ſeemed to be of ſervice in recruiting his conſtitution, he returned to renew his labours at Conſtance, where he ſoon died, a victim to the ardour of his zeal, and to the unremitting toil of his exertions.*(a)*

In the funeral eulogium which Poggio pronounced over the remains of Zabarella, he aſserts, that had the life of his friend been prolonged, he would in all probability have

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(a) Poggii Opera, p. 252—261.

have been inveſted with the pontifical purple. All orders of men now began impatiently to demand the election of a ſovereign pontiff. In compliance with their wiſhes, the cardinals aſsembled in conclave on the tenth of November, and after the uſual vehemence of diſsention, they at length agreed in the nomination of Otto Colonna, who immediately after his election aſsumed the appellation of Martin V.*(a)*

Nov. 10th. A. D. 1417.

Thus was terminated the famous ſchiſm of the west. Gregory XII. had died on the eighteenth of October preceding the election of Martin:*(b)* and though Benedict XIII. confident in the ſtrength of the fortifications of Paniſcola, refuſed to ſubmit to the decrees of the council, and ſtill aſsumed the ſtyle, and pretended to exerciſe the functions of the pontificate, his adherents were ſo few, and the tide of general opinion ran ſo ſtrongly in favour of Martin V. that he was henceforth regarded rather as an object of contempt than of fear.

The council had given an awful admonition to heretics. It had alſo, by an extraordinary exertion of authority, effected an union of the true believers under a legitimate head. But a moſt important and difficult matter remained unaccompliſhed, namely, the reformation of the

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(a) Muratori Annali d'Italia, tom. ix. *p.* 84.

(b) Ibid.

the church. The newly elected pontiff liſtened with apparent complacence to the petitions which were from time to time preferred to him, by the various ſubdiviſions of the council, beſeeching him to proſecute this good work by all the means in his power; but he contrived by ſtudied delays, ſo to protract the conſideration of the particular heads of reform, that the members of the aſſembly, weary of their long reſidence in Conſtance, were eager to embrace the firſt opportunity of returning to their reſpective homes. This opportunity was afforded them on the twenty-ſecond of April, 1418, on which day the pope formally diſmiſsed the council.*(a)* On the ſixteenth of May he left Conſtance, and paſsing through Schaffauſen, he proceeded by eaſy ſtages to Geneva,

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(a) From a M.S. which is preſerved at Vienna, L'Enfant has given the following liſt of the perſons who attended this wonderfully numerous aſsembly—Knights, 2300—Prelates, Prieſts, and Preſbyters, 18,000—Laymen, 80,000. In a more detailed catalogue, the Laymen are thus enumerated—Goldſmiths, 45—Shopkeepers, 330—Bankers, 242—Shoemakers, 70—Furriers, 48—Apothecaries, 44—Smiths, 92—Confectioners, 75—Bakers belonging to the pope, &c. 250—Vintners of Italian wines, 83—Victuallers for the poorer ſort, 43—Florentine Money-changers, 48—Taylors, 228—Heralds at arms, 65—Jugglers, or Merry Andrews, 346—Barbers, 306—Courtezans, whoſe habitations were known to the author of the liſt, 700. It ſhould ſeem, however, that this induſtrious chronicler had not viſited all theſe profeſsional ladies, as the Vienna liſt eſtimates their number at 1500! From a memorandum ſubjoined to this liſt, it appears, that during the ſitting of the council, one of theſe frail fair ones earned the ſum of 800 Florins.

L'Enfant's History of the Council of Constance, vol. ii. *p.* 415—416.

where he arrived on the eleventh of June.*(a)* At this city he kept his court for ſome months. Quitting Geneva on the twelfth day of September, he proceeded to Milan, and afterwards to Mantua. Here he fixed his reſidence during the remainder of the year, being prevented from viſiting his capital by the anarchy which the long abſence of legitimate authority had occaſioned in the ſtates of the church. As a grateful return for the hoſpitality with which he was received by the duke of Milan, he mediated a peace between that prince and Pandolfo Malateſta, who, after having taken Bergamo, had directed his march to Breſcia, and by the vigour of his operations, had cauſed the duke to tremble for the ſafety of the reſt of his dominions.*(b)*

Though it does not appear that Poggio held any office under the new pontiff, he travelled in the ſuite of Martin V. to Mantua. At this city he quitted the Roman court with a determination to ſpend ſome time in England. The motives which induced him to take this ſtep, ſeem to be concealed in ſtudied and myſterious ſilence. He was perhaps influenced in this inſtance by diſguſt, ariſing from the diſappointment of his hopes of preferment; or perhaps the freedom of his ſentiments concerning eccleſiaſtical affairs had involved him in thoſe difficulties

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(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 89.

(b) Ibid. p. 96.

difficulties and dangers which were dreaded by the prudence of his monitor Leonardo. The latter ſuppoſition is ſupported by the indiſputable fact, that he left Mantua with ſuch precipitation, that he had not time to take leave even of his moſt intimate friends.*(a)*

Poggio choſe England as the place of his retreat, in conſequence of an invitation which he had received from Beaufort, biſhop of Wincheſter. This prelate, who is well known to all the admirers of Shakſpeare by the title of cardinal Beaufort, was the ſon of the celebrated John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaſter, and uncle to the reigning Engliſh monarch Henry V. whoſe ſtudies he had ſuperintended during his reſidence at Oxford. In the year 1397, he was elected biſhop of Lincoln. After having enjoyed this promotion for the ſpace of eight years, he ſucceeded William of Wickham in the ſee of Wincheſter. He was a man of boundleſs ambition, well verſed in the crooked policy of court intrigue, and enormouſly rich. In the courſe of a pilgrimage which he undertook to make to Jeruſalem, he viſited the council of Conſtance,*(b)* where it is probable he firſt became acquainted with the merits of Poggio.

Nothing but a deſire to fly to a diſtance from peril, or

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 311.

(b) L'Enfant's History of the Council of Constance, vol. ii, *p.* 143.

the proſpect of conſiderable emolument, could have induced Poggio to fix his reſidence in Britain, a country regarded by the Italians as the remoteſt corner of the globe, and as the abode of ignorance and barbarity. He was in fact led to entertain great expectations by the magnificent promiſes of the biſhop of Wincheſter. But when he arrived in London, he found himſelf doomed to the common lot of thoſe who depend upon the patronage of the great. Beaufort wanted either leiſure or inclination to miniſter to the wants and wiſhes of his gueſt, and Poggio began to feel all the inconveniencies of ſtraitened circumſtances, aggravated by the reflection that he was ſituated at ſo ſerious a diſtance from his native land. His communication with his early friends, and the companions of his youthful years, was interrupted. He experienced the embarraſsments neceſsarily incident to thoſe who are thrown into a new circle of ſociety, to the habits of which they are entirely unaccuſtomed; and his mind became the prey of diſcontent and anxiety. He was alſo much chagrined on obſerving the uncultivated ſtate of the public mind in Britain, when compared with the enthuſiaſtic love of elegant literature which poliſhed and adorned his native country. The period of his arrival in England has been juſtly pronounced by one of our moſt accurate hiſtorians, to be in a literary point of view one of the darkeſt which occur in the whole ſeries of Britiſh annals.*(a)* Leland indeed, and other writers, enumerate

(a) See *Henry's History of Great Britain, vol.* x. *p.* 109—128.

enumerate long lists of scholars whom they indiscriminately grace with the title of most learned. These champions of literature were however nothing more than monks and astrologers, who were regarded with superstitious admiration by an ignorant age, but whose works are now deservedly buried in oblivion. The occult sciences, scholastic philosophy, and the mysteries of theology, absorbed the attention of the contemptible few, who advanced any pretensions to the cultivation of learning. Of the principles of composition and the graces of style they were totally ignorant—nay so imperfect was their knowledge of the Latin tongue, that almost every sentence of their writings is deformed by the barbarous introduction of English words, miserably metamorphosed by a Latin termination.*(a)*

The respectable author whose opinion of the state of British literature in the fifteenth century has been quoted above, ascribes the neglect of learning which disgraces this portion of our history to the following causes—The wars in which the English had been so long engaged against France—The schism of the west—The little encouragement afforded to learned men—and the scarcity of books.

With

(a) Thus William of Wyrcester tells us that the duke of York returned from Ireland, "et arrivavit apud Redbank prope Cestriam."

Henry's History ut supra.

With reſpect to the firſt of theſe cauſes, it may be obſerved, that a ſtate of warfare by no means in itſelf precludes the extenſion of ſcience, and the cultivation of letters. The moſt renowned luminaries of Greece flouriſhed during the devaſtation of the Peloponneſian war. Julius Cæſar and Cicero were not diverted from their literary purſuits by the tumult of faction, and the din of arms. And at the time when literature was revived in Italy, the provinces of that country were frequently laid waſte by hoſtile invaſions, and its cities were agitated by the diſcord of contending parties. As to the ſecond cauſe, namely, the diſtraction occaſioned by the ſchiſm, it may be remarked, that though this diſtraction was felt to a ſuperior degree in Italy, it did not in that country operate as the ſlighteſt check to the progreſs of learning.—The want of encouragement to learned men, is rather a conſequence than a cauſe of the forlorn ſtate of literature. Some degree of knowledge and taſte is requiſite to form the character of a patron of the ſtudious.

The neglect of the liberal arts which ſpread the gloom of barbariſm over our anceſtors of the fifteenth century, may perhaps be more juſtly aſcribed to the operation of the feudal ſyſtem. This primary cauſe prevented that excitation of the public mind, which is neceſsary to the ſucceſsful cultivation of literature. The feudal ſyſtem was a ſyſtem of ſtrict ſubordination, which preſcribed to every member of the political community his particular rank and place, and ſurrounded him by a circle, beyond which

which he was forbidden to paſs. In the ſpirit of this ſyſtem, till the reign of Henry IV. no farmer or mechanic was permitted to ſend his children to ſchool; and long after that period, a licenſe from his lord was neceſsary to enable a man of this deſcription to educate a ſon for the church. Whilſt the majority of the people were thus impeded in their approach to the fountains of knowledge, it was impoſsible for learning to raiſe her drooping head. The feudal ſuperiors, exalted by the accident of their birth to the enjoyment of power and plenty, had no motive to induce them to ſubmit to the labour of ſtudy. The younger branches of noble families were early taught to depend upon their ſwords for ſubſiſtence; and the acquiſition of learning was an object far beyond the ſcope of the oppreſsed and humble vaſsal.

The influence of the feudal ſyſtem in checking the progreſs of intellect will be more plainly viſible if we conſider the circumſtances of Italy during the period in queſtion. In that country the ambition of adventurers, and the extenſion of commerce, had broken the fetters of feudaliſm; and had enabled the bold and daring in every ſpecies of exertion, to riſe to the pitch of conſequence which their talents could vindicate. Hence the dormant powers of the human mind were rouſed, and the expanſion of learning and the liberal arts was promoted. The equalizing tyranny of the petty princes who uſurped the ſovereignty of various cities of Lombardy, whilſt it repreſsed the power of the ariſtocracy, called into life

life the abilities of all the orders of ſociety. The precarious title by which theſe chieftains held their exalted ſtations, induced them to court popularity by freeing the maſs of the people from invidious reſtraints. During the reſidence of the popes at Avignon, and during the continuance of the ſchiſm, the feeble rule exerciſed by the pontifical deputies over the eccleſiaſtical cities, enabled the inhabitants of thoſe cities to defy the authority which endeavoured to confine their exertions within the limits of ſlaviſh ſubordination. The factions which diſturbed the peace of the Italian republics, tended alſo in an eminent degree to call forth the full energy of abilities, which in other circumſtances would have been buried in obſcurity. Great talents are too frequently united with turbulence of ſpirit. In times when the order of ſociety is inverted by the tumults of civil broils, while men of peaceful ſouls retire trembling from the conflict, he who is endued with the energy of genius, comes forth, conſcious of his ſtrength, and deſpiſing every danger, exults in the hope of vindicating his claim to promotion.

It is evident that theſe various ſtimulants of intellect which occured in Italy, did not occur in Britain. On this account, whilſt the liberal arts were cultivated and reſpected in the former country, they were neglected and deſpiſed in the latter.

Another cauſe of incitement to the ſtudy of letters, which operated in Italy, and was wanting in Britain, aroſe

aroſe from the ſubdiviſion of the former country into a variety of petty ſtates. Theſe ſtates maintained a conſtant intercourſe with each other, by the medium of ambaſſadors, who were uſually ſelected from among the moſt diſtinguiſhed candidates for literary fame. Thus one of the moſt honourable offices in the civil department of the ſtate, was preſented to inflame the ambition of the ſtudious, and the diplomatic profeſsion became the nurſe of learning.

When the wiſh of acquiring knowledge was excited, the numerous copies of the works of the ancients which were ſcattered throughout Italy, afforded ample means of inſtruction; while the penury of Britain in this reſpect repreſsed the exertions of inquiry, and excluded the naſcent ſcholar from the cultivated regions of claſsic taſte.

The vexation which Poggio experienced, when he contemplated the gloomy contraſt which Britain exhibited, when compared with his native land, was encreased by the receipt of letters from Italy, informing him, that whilſt he was waſting his days in the unprofitable purſuit of preferment, his late aſsociates were enjoying, with ſcholaſtic rapture, the peruſal of ſome valuable manuſcripts, which had been diſcovered at Lodi, by Gerardo Landriani, biſhop of that city. This prelate had reſcued from a heap of rubbiſh, a very ancient copy of various works of Cicero, written in a character ſo antique, that few were able to decypher it. The manuſcript in queſtion contained, beſides Cicero's treatiſe on Rhetoric,

which was already in the hands of collectors of books, the following works of the ſame elegant writer, which had till this period eſcaped the reſearches of the learned —The three books De Oratore, entire—Brutus de claris Oratoribus—and the Orator ad Brutum. Nobody could be found at Milan who was able to read the character in which theſe treatiſes were written. But Coſmo of Cremona, a ſcholar of excellent accompliſhments, decyphered and copied the treatiſe De Oratore; and the celebrated Flavio Biondo,*(a)* undertook and ſoon accompliſhed

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(a) Flavio Biondo, who was born at Forli, in the year 1388, was a deſcendant of the illuſtrious family of Ravaldini. He has himſelf recorded the fact, that he ſtudied Grammar, Rhetoric, and Poetry, under the inſtructions of Giovanni Balliſtario, of Cremona. At an early age he was commiſsioned by his countrymen to conduct ſome negociations at the court of Milan; and it was during his viſit to that city, that he executed the taſk of copying the newly discovered manuſcript of Cicero's treatiſe, *De claris Oratoribus*. In the year 1430, he was making preparations for a journey to Rome; but Franceſco Barbaro, who held him in the higheſt eſteem, and who had procured for him the privileges of a Venetian citizen, having been lately appointed governor of the Bergameſe diſtrict, induced him to give up this deſign, and to accompany him to Bergamo, inveſted with the confidential office of chancellor of that city. He afterwards entered into the Roman chancery, under the patronage of Eugenius IV. by whom he was employed in the year 1434, in conjunction with the biſhop of Recanati, to ſolicit, on his behalf, the aſsiſtance of the Florentines and Venetians. He continued to hold the office of apoſtolic ſecretary, during the pontificate of Nicolas V. Calixtus III. and Pius II. In the year 1459, he attended the laſt mentioned pontiff to the council of Mantua. From that city he returned to Rome, where he died on the 4th of June, 1463, leaving five ſons, all well inſtructed in literature.

Of his numerous publications the following are the moſt conſiderable.

1. *Roma Instaurata*—A work of great erudition, in which he gave a moſt

compliſhed the taſk, of tranſcribing Brutus de claris Oratoribus. From theſe tranſcripts copies were ſpeedily multiplied, and diſperſed all over Italy, while Poggio

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exact deſcription of the buildings, gates, temples, and other monuments of ancient Rome, which ſtill reſiſted the deſtructive hand of time.

2. *Roma Triumphans*—This is alſo a moſt elaborate treatiſe, which contains an account of the laws, conſtitution, religion, and ſacred ceremonies of the Roman republic, collected from the incidental notices of theſe ſubjects, which are ſcattered through the wide extent of Latin literature.

3. Of a ſimilar deſcription is his *Italia Illustrata*, in which he deſcribes Italy, according to its ancient diviſion, into fourteen regions, and details the origin and hiſtory of each province and city. This work he compoſed at the requeſt of Alphonſo, king of Naples.

4. A treatiſe, *De Origine et Gestis Venetorum.*

5. He undertook a work of ſtill greater extent than any of thoſe which have been enumerated above, viz. A General Hiſtory of the period extending from the decline of the Roman Empire to his own times. He had finiſhed three decads and the firſt book of the fourth of this work, when its proſecution was interrupted by his death.

" In all theſe works," ſays Tiraboſchi, " though Biondo occaſionally deviates " into various errors, he diſplays a ſingular diligence in collecting from all " authors, whatever appertains to his ſubject; and when it is conſidered, that " they are the firſt eſsays in their kind, they cannot but give the reader a high " idea of the prodigious learning, and unwearied application of their author."

The hiſtorical works of Biondo, tranſlated into Italian by Lucio Fauno, were printed at Venice by Michel Tramezzino. A general collection of his writings was alſo printed in folio, at Baſil, by Frobenius, A. D. 1531, and 1539.—*Apostolo Zeno Dissertazioni Vossiane, tom* i. *p.* 229, *&c. Tiraboschi Storia della Let. Ital. tom.* vi. *p.* 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

was waiting with the utmoſt impatience, till Leonardo Aretino could convey one of theſe copies to the diſtant region in which his friend then reſided.*(a)*

At this inauſpicious period, the uneaſineſs and vexation of Poggio were greatly aggravated by the receipt of a letter from Niccolo Niccoli, containing grievous complaints againſt Leonardo Aretino, and informing him, that the bond of friendſhip, by which his correſpondent and Leonardo had for ſo long a ſpace of time been united, was for ever ſundered.

The quarrel which took place between Leonardo Aretino and Niccolo Niccoli, originated in a cauſe, which has, in every age, been productive of the fierceſt and moſt fatal contentions, namely, the uncontroled gratification of the paſsion, or rather of the appetite, of love. The following are the principal circumſtances which gave riſe to this unfortunate diſagreement. Giovanni, the younger brother of Niccolo, kept a miſtreſs of the name of Benvenuta. As the two brothers reſided in the ſame houſe, Niccolo had frequent opportunities of ſeeing this ſyren, whoſe charms and allurements gained ſuch an aſcendancy over his better principles, that after having for ſome time carried on an intrigue with her in private, he at length, in defiance of all decency, openly robbed his

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(a) Mehi Præfatio, p. xlvi.

his brother of his fair companion, and eſtabliſhed Benvenuta in his own apartments.*(a)* It may eaſily be imagined, that Giovanni did not tamely ſubmit to ſuch an injury. In conſequence of his reſentment, the neighbourhood was daily diſturbed by the outrages of fraternal diſcord. One of the worſt effects produced by ſuch disgraceful connexions as that which Niccolo had formed with Benvenuta, is the abſolute aſcendancy which artful and wicked women thereby gain over men of weak minds; and which they uniformly exerciſe, in ſetting their lovers at variance with their relations and friends. The history of Niccolo confirms the truth of this observation. By the crafty inſinuations of his miſtreſs, his affections were alienated from thoſe with whom he had formerly been united by the bonds of conſanguinity and friendſhip. Influenced by her ſuggeſtions, he dropped all intercourſe with his five brothers, and quarrelled with Lorenzo de' Medicis, whom he had till this unfortunate tranſaction, been proud to enumerate amongſt his deareſt aſsociates. In the height of her inſolence, Benvenuta had the audacity to defame the

(a) It is rather an extraordinary circumſtance, that Ambrogio Traverſari, the celebrated ſuperior of the monaſtery of Camaldoli, in ſeveral of his letters to Niccolo Niccoli, requeſts his correſpondent to preſent his compliments to this Benvenuta, whom he diſtinguiſhes by the title of *fœmina fidelissima*. Shall we ſuppoſe, that the reverend eccleſiaſtic was ſo little acquainted with the private hiſtory of the Florentine gentry, as to be ignorant of the intercourſe which ſubſiſted between Benvenuta and his friend—or ſhall we conclude that he did not regard this intercourſe as a breach of moral duty?

Ambrogii Traversarii Epistolæ, lib. viii. *ep.* ii. iii. v. *&c.*

the character of the wife of Jacopo, one of the brothers of Niccolo. Jacopo, for ſome time, endured her inſolence with patient contempt; but at length exaſperated by her petulance, he aſked the advice, and demanded the aſsiſtance of his brothers. They ſympathized with him in his reſentment, and readily gave him the aid which he required. Proceeding to the houſe of Niccolo, they ſeized the termagant beauty, and exalting her on the back of one of their attendants, to the great amuſement of the by-ſtanders, they inflicted on her a ſpecies of chaſtiſement, in the adminiſtration of which, convenience and ſeverity are conſulted much more than modeſty. Niccolo was a helpleſs witneſs of the pain and diſgrace ſuffered by Benvenuta. This ſpectacle had ſuch an effect on his feelings, that, vowing vengeance againſt his brothers, he retired to his houſe, and delivered himſelf up to the moſt immoderate tranſports of grief. Hearing that he was thus afflicted, ſeveral of his acquaintance paid him viſits of condolence, from which they returned, ridiculing his folly, and fully perſuaded that his anger had impaired his reaſon. In this conjuncture, Leonardo Aretino, being aware that Niccolo was not in a mood to liſten with patience to the remonſtrances which he thought it his duty to make to him on the extravagance of his conduct, cautiouſly avoided going to his houſe. This circumſtance did not eſcape the obſervation of the mourner, who ſent word to Leonardo, that he was ſurprized that he had not yet received from him the common offices of friendly conſolation. To this meſsage

Leonardo

Leonardo replied, that he was ſurprized that Niccolo ſhould expect conſolation from his friends on ſo trifling a ſubject of ſorrow as the chaſtiſement of his cook-maid; and that he thought it was time for him to put an end to his folly. This meſsage added fuel to the flame of Niccolo's wrath. He now kept no meaſures with Leonardo; but abjured his friendſhip, and eagerly embraced every opportunity of inveighing againſt him with the utmoſt bitterneſs.*(a)* Leonardo did not ſubmit with patience to the angry maledictions of his former aſsociate. In a bitter invective which he publiſhed againſt Niccolo, under the deſignation of *Nebulo Maleficus*, he returned railing for railing; and, notwithſtanding the mediation of their common acquaintance, the breach of friendſhip which had been thus unhappily occaſioned by the intemperate paſſions of Niccolo, daily became wider.*(b)*

Whilſt the feelings of Poggio were thus wounded by the diſsenſion of his deareſt friends, he earneſtly ſolicited from

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(a) Leonardi Aretini Epist. lib. v. *ep.* iv.

(b) Mehus, in his liſt of the works of Leonardo Aretino, intimates that a copy of this invective is preſerved in the library of New College, Oxford. A ſtrict and laborious ſearch, made by direction of the Warden of New College, in the month of November, 1801, has aſcertained the fact, that it does not now exiſt there. The catalogue of that valuable repoſitory of learning does indeed make mention of a MS. volume, as containing the oration in queſtion. On an accurate examination of this volume, however, no trace was found of Leonardo's Invective, nor any appearances to juſtify the ſuſpicion, that this or any other work has been withdrawn from it by the rapacity of literary peculation.

from his patron ſome recompenſe for the long journey which he had undertaken, at his invitation, and in reliance on his promiſes of preferment and ſupport. His ſolicitations were for a long time entirely fruitleſs. He found, by mortifying experience, that men of exalted rank are much more ready to make promiſes than to fulfil their engagements. "At length," to adopt his own expreſsion, "the mountain laboured, and produced a "mouſe." The wealthy and powerful biſhop of Wincheſter preſented his client with a benefice, the annual income of which was nominally one hundred and twenty florins; but in conſequence of various deductions, its revenues did not in fact amount even to that inconſiderable ſum. Poggio had always entertained great objections to the clerical life. His objections were not founded upon a contempt of the inſtitutions of religion. On the contrary, they proceeded from the exalted idea which he entertained of the duties of the clerical office. Senſible, as he himſelf ſays in a letter to Niccolo Niccoli, of the ſerious charge which they impoſe upon themſelves, who undertake the cure of ſouls, he was diffident of his qualifications to execute the duties of an office, the faithful diſcharge of which demanded the moſt indefatigable induſtry, and the moſt ſcrupulous correctneſs of moral conduct.*(a)* Influenced by these conſiderations, which certainly

(a) "Nam ut alias ad te ſcripſi, non ignoro, quam grave ſit ſubire onus "Clerici, et quantâ curâ oporteat eos torqueri, ſi quâ ſint conſcientiâ, qui ex "beneficio vivunt. Quum enim præmia non dentur, niſi laboranti, qui non

certainly bear very ſatisfactory evidence of the purity of his principles, he wiſhed to exchange his benefice for ſome ſecular ſource of emolument. As it is certain that he never took prieſt's orders, it is probable that he either procured permiſsion to diſpoſe of his preferment, or that if he obtained from his patron any remuneration of his ſervices, it was conveyed in a mode more agreeable to his views and feelings. However this may be, he was weary of his reſidence in England, and impatiently longed to return to his native land. At this juncture, he received from Italy two propoſals, the one on the part of Alamano Adimaro, Archbiſhop of Piſa, and Cardinal of St. Euſebius, who invited him to accept the office of Secretary

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" laborat ut ait Apoſtolus, non manducet. Hæc tamen dicuntur facilius quam " fiant, et ut vulgo aiunt, ſatius eſt in manibus Dei incidere quam hominis. " Sed tamen ſi opus Petri, hoc eſt promiſsio perficeretur, relinquerem iſta ſacra, " ad quæ nonniſi invitus accedo, non quod Religionem ſpernam aliquo modo, " ſed quia non confido me talem futurum, qualem describunt eſſe debere."

Ambroſii Traversarii Opera, tom. ij. *p.* 1123.

Theſe were the ſentiments of Poggio, in the ſeaſon of ſerious meditation. On another occaſion, when irritated by the ſarcaſms of Cardinal Julian, he aſcribed his abjuration of the prieſthood to a ſomewhat different motive. " No- " lo eſſe Sacerdos, nolo Beneficia; vidi enim plurimos, quos bonos viros cenſe- " bam, maxime autem liberales, poſt ſuſceptum ſacerdotium avaros eſſe et " nulli deditos virtuti, ſed inertiæ, otio, voluptati. Quod ne mihi quoque ac- " cidat veritus, decrevi procul a veſtro ordine conſumere hoc, quidquid super- " eſt, temporis perigrinationis meæ; ex hac enim magnâ capitis Sacerdotum " raſurâ, conſpicio non ſolum pilos abradi, ſed etiam conſcientiam et virtu- " tem."

Poggii Epiſtolæ lvii. *ep.* xxvii.

cretary to the Roman pontiff; the other from Piero Lamberteſchi, who offered him a ſituation, the nature of which is not preciſely known, but which was probably that of public profeſſor in one of the Italian univerſities. Poggio ſeems to have received the propoſal of Lamberteſchi with conſiderable ſatisfaction. On this ſubject he thus expreſſes himſelf in a letter to Niccolo Niccoli:

"The day before yeſterday, I received two letters "from you, and one from Piero Lamberteſchi. These "letters I have read with great attention. I am pleaſed "with Piero's plan, and I think I ſhall follow your ad- "vice. He ſays, that he will do his endeavour to pro- "cure me five hundred gold florins for three years' ſer- "vices. Make them ſix hundred, and I will agree to "the propoſal. He lays before me flattering hopes of "future profitable contingencies, and I am inclined to "believe, that theſe hopes may probably be realized: "yet I think it more prudent to covenant for ſomething "certain, than to depend on hope alone. I like the "employment to which he invites me, and I hope I "ſhall produce ſomething worth reading; but for this "purpoſe, as I have informed him, I muſt be indulged "with leiſure and retirement."

The invitation of the cardinal of St. Euſebius was not ſo ſatisfactory to the wiſhes of Poggio. In the letter from which the foregoing extracts have been made, he thus expreſſes himſelf.

"I obſerve

" I obſerve what the cardinal writes on the ſubject " of the ſecretaryſhip. If I had valued that office as " highly as ſome do, I ſhould long ago have returned to " Rome. I have leſs eſteem for the pontificate and its " members than they imagine, for I wiſh to be a free " man, and not a public ſlave. Ratify the offers of " Piero, and you ſhall ſee that I ſhall avoid the Roman " court with more diligence than many people would " be apt to believe. I muſt earneſtly requeſt that you " will not communicate my plans to any one, ſince we " are ignorant of what may happen—for man propoſes, " but God directs the iſſues of things.*(a)*

The event of theſe negociations demonſtrated the prudence of Poggio, in not precipitately rejecting the invitation of Adimaro. Some obſtacle intervened to prevent the execution of the plan propoſed by Lamberteſchi; and we may eſtimate the impatience with which Poggio endured his exile from Italy, by the undoubted fact, that notwithſtanding the above confeſsion of his diſlike of the pontifical court, he accepted the office of Secretary to Martin V. He accordingly quitted England, where his hopes had been ſo ſeverely diſappointed, and after a journey, of the incidents of which no record appears in his works, he once more took up his reſidence at Rome.

(a) *Ambrogii Traverſarii Opera, tom.* ii. *p.* 1122.

It is very probable, that Poggio communicated to his Italian correſpondents, an account of the remarkable circumſtances which he obſerved in the courſe of his journey to England, and of his return to his native land. It is alſo reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that ſome of the letters which he wrote from this country, would contain his opinion of the manners and cuſtoms of our anceſtors. If this was the caſe, we have reaſon to lament that theſe intereſting documents are not yet made public. Though incidental mention is frequently made in the works of Poggio, of his reſidence in Britain, he never dwells upon this topic. A trait of the manners of the Engliſh in the fifteenth century, occurs in his dialogue on Nobility, in which he thus notices the Engliſh ariſtocracy—

" The nobles of England deem it diſgraceful to reſide
" in cities, and prefer living in retirement in the coun-
" try. They eſtimate the degree of a man's nobility by
" the extent of his eſtates. Their time is occupied in
" agricultural purſuits, and they trade in wool and ſheep,
" not thinking it at all derogatory to their dignity, to
" be engaged in the ſale of the produce of their lands.
" I have known a wealthy merchant, who had cloſed
" his mercantile concerns, veſted his money in land, and
" retired into the country, become the founder of a
" noble race; and I have ſeen him freely admitted into
" the ſociety of the moſt illuſtrious families. Many
" perſons alſo of ignoble blood, have been advanced
" to the honors of nobility by the favour of their ſo-
" vereign,

" vereign, which they have merited by their warlike " achievements.*(a)*

In his *Historia Disceptativa Convivialis*, he relates another trait of the manners of our forefathers, which he records as an inſtance of their politeneſs. A ſplenetic traveller would probably have quoted it as a proof of their love of good living. " The Engliſh," ſays he, " if they meet with any one at whoſe table they " have dined; even though the rencounter ſhould take " place ten days after the feaſt, thank him for his good " entertainment; and they never omit this ceremony, " leſt they ſhould be thought inſenſible of his kind- " neſs."*(b)*

From the following ſtory, which Poggio has chronicled in his *Facetiæ*, we learn, that at this early period, the Engliſh were addicted to the practice of diverting themſelves at the expenſe of their brethren on the other ſide of St. George's channel, and that when he viſited this country, an Iriſhman was already become the common hero of a tale of abſurdity.

" When I was in England I heard a curious anecdote " of an Iriſh captain of a ſhip. In the midſt of a vio- " lent

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(a) Poggii Opera, p. 69.

(b) Ibid. p. 36.

" lent ſtorm, when all hands had given themſelves over " for loſt, he made a vow, that if his ſhip ſhould be ſaved " from the imminent danger which threatened to over- " whelm her, he would make an offering at the church " of the Virgin Mary of a waxen taper, as large as the " main-maſt. One of the crew obſerving that it would " be impoſsible to diſcharge this vow, ſince all the wax " in England would not be ſufficient to make ſuch a " taper—Hold your tongue, ſaid the captain, and do " not trouble yourſelf with calculating whether I can " perform my promiſe or not, provided we can eſcape " the preſent peril." *(a)*

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 474.

CHAP. IV.

STATE of Italy during Poggio's reſidence in England—Martin V. retires to Florence—Retroſpect of the hiſtory of that city—Martin is diſsatisfied with the conduct of the Florentines—Baldaſsare Coſsa is liberated from confinement, and ſubmits to the authority of Martin V.—His death—Martin V. transfers his court to Rome—A reconciliation is effected between Leonardo Aretino and Niccolo Niccoli—Poggio's letter to Leonardo on this event—Council of Pavia—The council is transferred to Siena, and there diſsolved—Hoſtility of Alfonſo of Arragon againſt Martin V.—Unſucceſsful attempts to cruſh the reformers in Germany—Termination of the ſchiſm—Poggio's dialogue on Avarice—The Fratres Obſervantiæ ſatirized by Poggio—Poggio excites diſpleaſure by curbing the zeal of the Fratres Obſervantiæ—His letters on this ſubject—His opinion of the monastic life and itinerant preachers—Reflections.

CHAP. IV.

WHILST Poggio was living in a kind of exile in England, the ſovereign pontiff was in a manner baniſhed from his capital. On his arrival in Italy, Martin V. found the ſtates of the church in the hands of troops of banditti, who had taken advantage of the diſorders of the times, to ſpread ruin and devaſtation through every quarter of the pontifical dominions. The paſses, and places of ſtrength, were ſo generally occupied by theſe adventurers, who were in the pay of a noted chieftain, named Braccio di Montone, that the pontiff did not dare to expoſe himſelf to their outrages, by attempting to eſtabliſh himſelf in Rome. The inhabitants of Bologna alſo, eſpouſing the cauſe of John XXII. had ſhut their gates againſt him. He was therefore reduced to the neceſsity of taking refuge in ſome friendly territory. In this extremity, the Florentines offered him an aſylum,

and Martin accordingly removed his court from Mantua to their city, into which he made his public entry with extraordinary pomp, on the twenty-ſixth of February, 1419.*(a)* His reſidence in Florence did not, however, produce within his mind any friendly ſentiments towards his hoſts. The Florentines indeed, by their behaviour to their illuſtrious gueſt, greatly diminiſhed the value of the favour which they had conferred upon him, in affording him a place of reſt. At this period, they were elated with the ſelf-confidence occaſioned by a long ſeries of almoſt uninterrupted proſperity. Filippo, who upon the death of his brother, Giovanni Maria, had ſucceeded to the ducal throne of Milan, diſclaiming the hoſtile views of his predeceſſors, had lived in a ſtate of friendſhip with his Tuſcan neighbours, and did not even interpoſe to prevent them from reducing the diſtrict of Piſa under their dominion. In the year 1408 the repoſe of the Florentines had been diſturbed by an invaſion of their territories by Ladiſlaus, king of Naples, who had taken poſſeſſion of a conſiderable portion of the eccleſiaſtical ſtates: but with the aſſiſtance of Louis of Anjou, they had diſcomfited the uſurper, and had expelled him from the dominions of the church. By his death, which happened in the year 1414, they had been freed from all fear of hoſtile incurſions, and for the ſpace of five years from that event, they had enjoyed the bleſsing of peace. During this period they had extended their

(a) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 93.

their commerce, and greatly encreaſed their opulence and power. In the inſolence of their pride, they looked upon the wandering pontiff with contempt. Inſenſible to thoſe delicate impulſes which prompt man to regard the unfortunate with reſpect, they wantonly publiſhed the ſentiments of their hearts; and Martin was irritated and diſguſted by hearing his name made the ſubject of ridicule, and the burden of contumelious ſongs. *(a)* The Florentine populace were betrayed into theſe violations of decorum, by their attachment to the intereſts of Braccio di Montone; and this undiſguiſed partiality to his enemy exaſperated the indignation of the pontiff. Yielding, however, to the preſſure of circumſtances, he was perſuaded by the ſolicitations of the Florentine government, to agree to terms of pacification with Braccio, whom he inveſted, in quality of vicar of the church, with the government of the cities of Perugia, Aſiſi, Jeſi, and Todi; in return for which condeſcenſion, the rebellious chieftain gave up to the pontiff the towns of Narni, Terni, Orvieto, and Orta. *(b)* Braccio being thus reconciled to the head of the church, and being encouraged by the promiſe of an ample recompenſe for his ſervices, turned his arms againſt his late brethren in rebellion;

(a) Poggii Hiſtoria Flor. lib. iv. v. Martin was particularly offended by a ballad, the burden of which was, *Papa Martino non vale un quattrino. Ibid. p.* 203. *apud notas.—Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 103.

(b) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 97.

and reduced the Bologneſe to ſubmiſsion to the Roman ſee.*(a)*

During theſe tranſactions, Coſmo de' Medicis, who had been united by the ſtricteſt ties of friendſhip to Baldaſsare Coſsa, the depoſed pontiff, was very urgent in his petitions to Martin V. to liberate his unfortunate predeceſsor from confinement. Martin at length graciouſly aſsented to Coſmo's requeſt; and diſpatched the neceſsary orders to Heidleberg. But the impatience of Baldaſsare, who was weary of ſecluſion from the world, had already ſtimulated him to purchaſe his freedom from the Count Palatine, (to whoſe cuſtody he had been aſsigned) at the price of thirty thouſand pieces of gold. Having thus obtained his liberty, he croſsed the Alps, and arrived ſafely in Italy. The well known turbulence of his ſpirit led many to expect that he would reclaim the pontifical honours, and diſtract the Chriſtian church by a renewal of the ſchiſm. But to the ſurpriſe of every body, he repaired with all convenient ſpeed to Florence, where he arrived on the 13th of May, 1419, and there, kiſsing the feet of Martin, he acknowledged him as the only true and legitimate ſucceſsor of St. Peter. The ſpectators of this extraordinary ſcene were melted into tears, and the compaſsion and generoſity of the pontiff were excited

(a) Bologna ſurrendered to Braccio after a ſhort ſiege, July 15th. 1420. *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 98.

excited by this unexpected act of ſubmiſsion. Deeply affected by the ſerious inſtance of the inſtability of human greatneſs, which was thus preſented before his eyes, Martin received his humbled predeceſsor with kindneſs; and endeavoured to alleviate his ſenſe of the degradation which he had experienced, by creating him cardinal, and biſhop of Toſcolano. The haughty ſpirit of Baldaſsare did not long undergo the mortification of witneſsing the pomp and ſplendour of which he had been ſo rudely deprived. He died at Florence, on the twenty-ſecond day of December, and was interred with much pomp, in the church of St. John. Coſino de' Medicis erected to his honour a magnificent monument, on which he cauſed to be engraven the following ſimple inſcription; BALTHASSARIS COSSÆ IOHANNIS XXII. QUONDAM PAPÆ CORPUS HOC TUMULO CONDITUM.*(a)* Ammirato aſserts in his hiſtory of Florence, that Baldaſsare, at the time of his death was poſseſsed of immenſe treaſures, which were inherited or ſeized by the family of the Medicis; and in this aſsertion he has been copied by ſubſequent writers. But Muratori maintains, on the contrary, that it is clearly proved by his laſt will, that the depoſed pontiff died poor rather than rich.*(b)*

The

(a) Platina, p. 398.

(b) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 93. Baldaſsare Coſsa is generally diſtinguiſhed by the pontifical appellation of John XXIII. He was however in fact, only the twenty ſecond of that name who filled the papal chair. The

The territories of the church being reſtored to peace by the active exertions of Braccio di Montone, and no obſtacle remaining to prevent the pontiff from viſiting his

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miſtake in his deſignation ariſes from the extraordinary circumſtance of the annaliſts of the holy ſee, admitting into the ſeries of pontiffs the famous pope Joan, who it is aſſerted, on ſucceeding Leo IV. in the pontificate, aſſumed the name of John VII. This eccleſiaſtical Amazon is ſaid to have been an Engliſh-woman, who went in man's attire with her lover to Athens, where ſhe made ſuch a proficiency in her ſtudies, that ſhe roſe through the ſubordinate degrees of clerical preferment to the ſupreme honours of the pontificate. It is further alledged, that having become pregnant by one of her domeſtics, ſhe was ſeized with the pains of labour, as ſhe was conducting a proceſſion to the church of St. John Lateran, and expired in the ſtreet. This improbable ſtory is related by Platina, who obſerves however, that though it is commonly believed, it reſts upon doubtful authority. He informs us, that thoſe who maintain the truth of this narration, alledge in proof of its authenticity, two circumſtances, namely, that the pontiffs always avoid paſſing through the ſtreet where this untoward accident is ſaid to have happened; and that on the inſtallation of a newly elected pope, he is obliged to undergo a ceremony, which would infallibly detect any attempt at a repetition of the abovementioned impoſture. With regard to the firſt of theſe allegations, Platina acknowledges the fact of the pontiff's avoiding the ſuppoſed ſcene of Joan's diſgrace; but ſays, that the reaſon of this is, that the ſtreet in queſtion is too narrow to admit the paſſage of a crowded retinue. With regard to the ſecond, he makes the following truly curious remark. "De "ſecundâ ita ſentio, ſedem illam (perforatam ſedem ſcilicet ubi pontificis genitalia "ab ultimo diacono attrectantur) ad id paratam eſſe, ut qui in tanto magiſtratu "conſtituitur ſciat ſe non deum ſed hominem eſſe, et neceſſitatibus naturæ, utpote "egerendi ſubjectum eſſe, unde merito ſtercoraria ſedes vocatur."

In the annotations ſubjoined by Panvinio to the Italian tranſlation of Platina's hiſtory publiſhed at Venice, A. D. 1744, it is moſt ſatisfactorily proved that this ſtory of John VII. alias pope Joan, is a groſs falſehood invented by one Martin, a monk.

his capital, he departed from Florence, and proceeded to Rome, to which city he was welcomed by the enthuſiaſtic joy of the populace, on the twenty-ſecond of September, 1420. Sept. 22d. A. D. 1420.

The Pontifical houſehold being once more regularly eſtabliſhed in the capital of the church, Poggio, as it has been before obſerved, was induced by the invitation of the cardinal of St. Euſebius, to accept the office of Secretary. The time of his arrival in Rome is not exactly aſcertained; but it appears that his firſt care after his reeſtabliſhment in the ſacred chancery, was to renew with his friends the perſonal and epiſtolary communication, which his long abſence from Italy had interrupted. The unfortunate quarrel of Leonardo Aretino and Niccolo Niccoli, alſo engaged his early attention. Nothing is more painful to a man of an ingenuous mind, than the occurrence of diſſenſion between thoſe for whom he entertains an equal degree of friendly regard. Poggio, therefore, embraced the firſt opportunity which preſented itſelf, of exerting his utmoſt endeavours to effect a reconciliation between the angry diſputants. A long letter, which Leonardo had diſpatched to him during his reſidence in London, with the view of giving him a full account of the cauſe of this diſgraceful ſtrife, had never reached him; but ſoon after his arrival at Rome, Leonardo ſupplied this deficiency by ſending him a copy of this letter, which he had kept for the inſpection of his

his other friends.(a) Poggio ſoon found that in his endeavours to terminate this unhappy difference, he was likely to experience as ſerious obſtacles in the wounded pride of Leonardo, as in the infatuated wrath of Niccolo.(b) In this difficult affair, therefore, he thought it adviſable to avail himſelf of the aſsiſtance of the common friends of both parties. Ambrogio Traverſari had already, indeed, interpoſed his good offices to bring about the deſired reconciliation, but without effect.(c) Poggio, however, conceived great hopes, that the mediation of Franceſco Barbaro, for whom Leonardo entertained a high degree of reſpect, would have conſiderable weight; and when that eminent ſcholar, being veſted with the office of ambaſsador extraordinary of the Venetian Republic, paid a viſit to Rome,(d) where he was met by Leonardo, he flattered himſelf that the reconciliation which he ſo ardently wiſhed, would be effected. Franceſco was equally deſirous with Poggio, to diſcharge the duties of a peace-maker; but he found Leonardo ſo determined upon requiring from his antagoniſt a very ample apology for his conduct, that he was almoſt

(a) *Leon. Aret. epiſt. lib.* iv. *ep.* xxi.

(b) *Ibid. lib.* iv. *ep.* xxii.

(c) *Ambrogii Traversarii Opera, tom.* ii. *p.* 297.

(d) This embaſsy occured in the year, 1426—*Agostini Istoria degli Scrittori Viniziani, tom.* ii. *p.* 58, 59, 60.

almoſt induced to give up the cauſe in deſpair: and Leonardo, being perhaps apprehenſive that at the time of his departure from Rome, his friends would renew their efforts to ſhake his reſolution, withdrew from the city in ſo ſudden and ſecret a manner, that Poggio had not an opportunity of taking leave of him. For this conduct the latter gently reproved his friend in a letter, in which he ſtated to him his opinion, that in his affair with Niccolo, it was by no means advisable to uſe recrimination, or to demand an apology, and that nothing was requiſite but a mutual oblivion of the paſt. "Remember," ſays he, "that it is the characteriſtic of a great mind, to "forget, and not to revenge injuries, and that the du- "ties of friendſhip are paramount to all other conſider- "ations. You ſeem to me to attach too much impor- "tance to trifles, which it will be more conducive to "your glory to deſpiſe, than to make them the ſubjects "of ſerious concern." *(a)* In a ſecond letter on the ſame ſubject he informed Leonardo, that he could not without the utmoſt vexation, witneſs the interruption of a friendſhip which had been eſtabliſhed on the beſt foundation of mutual eſteem, and which had continued for ſo long a period; and that his concern was much encreaſed, when he obſerved that their diſagreement was detrimental to the good fame of both parties. *(b)* In this letter

U he

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 306.

(b) Ibid. p. 347.

he grants, that Niccolo has his failings, but reminds his correſpondent, that imperfection is the common lot of mortality, and that it is our duty, according to the inſtructions of the apoſtle, to bear one another's burdens. (a)

The obſtinacy of Leonardo for ſome time withſtood the ſolicitations of his friends. But Franceſco Barbaro, proceeding from Rome to Florence, laboured with ſuch earneſtneſs and prudence to allay the heat of his reſentment, that he at length conſented once more to enrol Niccolo in the number of his friends. The news of this event drew from Poggio a letter of thanks and congratulation to the mediator, and the following prudent and friendly admonition to Leonardo.

" I have juſt received intelligence of an event, the
" moſt delightful which could poſsibly have occurred at
" the preſent time; namely, the reconciliation which
" has taken place between you and Niccolo. This cir-
" cumſtance inſpires me with the greateſt pleaſure, eſpe-
" cially becauſe it proves that you do not belye the pro-
" miſe of your former years; but that you ſupport the
" conſiſtency of your excellent character. It muſt now
" be your care to act with ſuch prudence, that this recon-
" ciliation may be improved into a renewal of friendſhip.
" It

(a) *Poggii Opera, p. 347.*

" It is not enough that your hatred is at an end. Love
" and kind affection muſt ſucceed in the place of animo-
" ſity. Theſe are the indications of an upright, ingenu-
" ous, and virtuous mind. Reaſsume then I beſeech you,
" that familiar and friendly intercourſe with Niccolo,
" which I have for ſo long a ſpace of time witneſsed
" with ſo much pleaſure. Carefully avoid every thing
" which may tend to impair your mutual good will; and
" act in ſuch a manner that this reconciliation may ap-
" pear to have been effected, not merely by the interpo-
" ſition of your friends, but by your own free will, and
" with your hearty concurrence. By your conduct you
" have obtained the greateſt glory, and I truſt you will
" find it the ſource of the moſt exquiſite pleaſure. I can
" aſsure you that this event has given the utmoſt ſatis-
" faction to all our friends at Rome.—I ſay *our* friends;
" for I have the happineſs of being connected by the
" bonds of friendſhip with all your aſsociates in the pon-
" tifical court. The reputation which you have acquired
" by your conduct in this affair, you muſt ſupport by
" perſeverance and firmneſs of mind; for your late en-
" mity would ſoon have injured the reputation both of
" yourſelf and of Niccolo. By your reconciliation how-
" ever you have maintained your dignity, and concili-
" ated the eſteem of the virtuous and the learned. I have
" written a ſhort letter to Niccolo, and am anxious to
" receive his anſwer; for I am ſurpriſed that neither you
" nor he, ſhould have given me the leaſt intimation of

"this event; eſpecially when you were both fully ſenſi-
"ble how much I was intereſted in it." (a)

In the thirty-ninth ſeſſion of the council of Conſtance, it had been decreed, that for the ſuppreſſion and prevention of hereſy and ſchiſm, at the end of five years after the diſſolution of the exiſting council, another ſhould be ſummoned; a third at the expiration of ſeven years from the breaking up of the ſecond; and that after theſe extraordinary meetings, general councils ſhould be regularly held once in every ten years. At the expiration of the preſcribed term, therefore, Martin V. according to the tenor of the firſt head of this decree, ſummoned the repreſentatives of the different nations of Chriſtendom to repair to
A. D. 1423. Pavia. Nothing however having lately occured, particularly to intereſt the Chriſtian powers in the proceedings of the Roman hierarchy, the inconſiderable numbers of this aſſembly formed a ſtriking contraſt, with the multitudes who had a few years before this time flocked on a ſimilar occaſion to the city of Conſtance. The plague having made its appearance in Pavia, the council was removed to Siena where it began to be more numerouſly frequented. Alfonſo, king of Arragon, took this opportunity of ſupporting, in oppoſition to Martin V. the pretenſions of Piero da Luna, who ſtill aſſumed the name of Benedict XIII. and maintained a ſort of pontifical ſplendor

(a) *Poggii Epiſt.* lvii. *p.* 161.

dor in the fortreſs of Paniſcola. Alfonſo was prompted thus to trouble the peace of the church, by the reſentment which he felt againſt Martin, in conſequence of that pontiff's refuſing to acknowledge the legitimacy of his pretenſions to the throne of Naples. On the death of Ladiſlaus, the crown of that diſtracted realm was inherited by his ſiſter Joanna II. *(a)* who ſoon after her acceſſion married Jacques, count of La Marche, a prince of the royal blood of France. The ambition of Jacques, who, not contented with adminiſtering the government in the name of his wife, wiſhed to be acknowledged as ſovereign paramount of the kingdom, occaſioned ſerious diſputes between him and Joanna, which terminated in his being obliged to quit the territories of Naples and flee to France. Soon after his arrival in that country he renounced the purſuit of ſecular concerns, and aſſumed the habit of the Franciſcan order. In this conjuncture, Louis III. of Anjou revived the claims of his houſe upon the throne of Naples, and marched into Italy, at the head of a conſiderable

(a) Of this great perſonage Poggio has recorded an ancedote which commemorates her reputation for gallantry, and her ready wit. "The Florentines," ſays he, "once ſent a certain doctor of laws of the name of Franceſco, as their "embaſſador to the court of Naples. Franceſco being appriſed of the amorous "diſpoſition of the reigning queen, Joanna, requeſted on his ſecond interview "with her majeſty, that ſhe would grant him a private audience, as he was in"ſtructed by his Republic, to communicate certain matters to her majeſty alone. "The queen accordingly withdrew with him into an inner apartment, where "after a ſhort preliminary converſation, he abruptly made to her a declaration of "love; on which Joanna looked upon him with a pleaſant ſmile and ſaid, *Was "this alſo in your inſtructions?*"

Poggii Opera, p. 448.

able army, with the intention of profecuting his rights by the ſword.*(a)* Seeing the neceſsity of oppoſing againſt this invader, an adverſary of diſtinguiſhed abilities, Joanna adopted as her ſon, Alfonſo, King of Arragon, a prince of great courage and military ſkill, by whoſe active exertions, Louis of Anjou was ſoon driven from the Neapolitan territories. The adopted ſon of Joanna being unfortunately influenced by the views of her late huſband, and wiſhing to rule by his own ſole authority, that princeſs was juſtly diſguſted by his ingratitude, and in

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(a) Whilſt Louis II. on whoſe claim that of Louis III, was founded, was on his march from Provence to the Neapolitan frontier, he was viſited in his camp by Rodolfo of Camerino, to whom he made an oſtentatious diſplay of a valuable aſſortment of jewels, which he deſtined as ornaments of the regal ſtate, which he flattered himſelf he ſhould ſhortly attain. Rodolfo, unmoved by the brilliant ſpectacle, aſked him what was the value and uſe of this collection. Louis anſwered, that it was very valuable, but of no utility. "I can ſhow you at my houſe," replied Rodolfo, "a pair of ſtones which coſt only ten florins, and annually produce "me a revenue of two hundred." The duke was aſtoniſhed at this aſſertion, but Rodolfo ſoon ſolved the riddle, by ſhewing him a mill which he had lately erected, intimating at the ſame time, that a wiſe man will always prefer utility to finery.

Poggii Opera, p. 440.

Rodolfo was indeed a man of a very phlegmatic humour, as appears by the advice which he gave to one of his fellow citizens, who informed him of his intention of travelling with a view of ſeeing the curioſities of different countries. "Go," ſaid he, "to the neighbouring town of Macerata, and there you will ſee "hills, vallies, and plains, wood and water, lands cultivated and uncultivated. "This is the world in miniature; for travel as far as you pleaſe, and you will ſee "nothing elſe."

Poggii Opera, p. 441.

in the year 1423, ſhe annulled the act of his adoption, ſubſtituting in his place, his rival, the duke of Anjou. This circumſtance gave riſe to an obſtinate war between the two parties, in the commencement of which Martin entered into an alliance with Louis, and by beſtowing on him the inveſtiture of the kingdom of Naples, ſupported his claims, in oppoſition to thoſe of Alfonſo. Prompted by the ſpirit of revenge, the Arragoneſe monarch exerted all his influence to raiſe a party againſt Martin in the council of Siena. The pontiff, alarmed by the intrigues of Alfonſo, haſtily diſſolved that aſſembly early in the year 1424, ſummoning another to meet at the end of ſeven years, in the city of Baſil.*(a)*

But the diſſolution of the council did not ſhelter Martin from the conſequences of Alfonſo's indignation. Braccio di Montone, taking advantage of the embarraſſments of the pontiff, again invaded the ſtates of the church; and after making himſelf maſter of ſeveral towns in the eccleſiaſtical diſtrict, laid ſiege to Aquila. Alarmed by the loſs of theſe places, and apprehenſive, that ſhould Braccio make himſelf maſter of Aquila, he would in fact keep Rome itſelf in a ſtate of blockade, the pontiff applied for ſuccour to Joanna of Naples, and by the aſſiſtance of that princeſs raiſed a conſiderable body of forces, which he ſent to ſtop the career of the invader. In this expedition

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(a) Platina, p. 399.—Tiraboschi storia della Letteratura Ital. tom. vi. p. 8.

expedition the army of the church was ſignally ſucceſsful. Braccio quitting a moſt advantageous poſition, advanced to give battle to the pontifical troops in the open field, on the ſecond day of June, 1424. The encounter of his cavalry was fierce and impetuous; but in conſequence of his raſhneſs, his army was defeated, and Braccio himſelf being mortally wounded, was carried priſoner into Aquila, where he died in the courſe of a few hours after his arrival. His body was conveyed to Rome, and buried without the walls in unconſecrated ground. By the death of Braccio, the pontiff recovered Perugia, Aſiſi, and the other cities which the ſucceſsful rebellion of that chieftain had compelled him to yield to his dominion. The ſtates of the church were now reſtored to tranquillity. The roads were cleared of the banditti by which they had been ſo long infeſted—the traveller journeyed without moleſtation or fear—the laws were reſpected, and peace and order ſucceeded to anarchy and rapine. (a) The quiet of the church was alſo further ſecured by the death of Benedict XIII. who in the beginning of this year, cloſed his earthly career at Paniſcola, at the advanced age of ninety. (b)

June 2d. A. D. 1424.

About this time Martin had an opportunity of gratifying the animoſity which he entertained againſt the Florentines,

(a) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 114, 119, 120, 121.

(b) *Ibid. p.* 116.

Florentines, by ſecretly fomenting certain diſputes which had taken place between the adminiſtrators of their republic and the duke of Milan. Encouraged by the connivance of the pontiff, that prince declared war againſt the Tuſcan ſtate, the territories of which he menaced with a conſiderable army. In the courſe of this conteſt, which was ſingularly obſtinate and bloody, the pontiff had the ſatisfaction of retaining in his own hands the balance of power; and of beholding the ſupercilious Tuſcans, humbled by diſaſters and defeats, ſuing to him for aſsiſtance and entreating his mediation for the reſtoration of peace. Martin, though he profeſsed the ſtricteſt impartiality between the hoſtile parties, not only refuſed to aſsiſt the Florentines, but ſtill continued ſecretly to ſtimulate the ambition of their adverſary. Being thus diſappointed in their application to the pontiff, the Florentines had recourſe to the Venetians, whoſe dread of the growing power of the duke of Milan, induced them readily to enter into an alliance with his antagoniſts. Animated by this acceſsion of ſtrength, the Florentines proſecuted the war with renewed vigour, and with ſuch ſucceſs, that the duke was glad to accept of the mediation opportunely proffered by his friend the pontiff, under whoſe auſpices a peace was concluded at Ferrara in the year 1428.*(a)*

(a) Poggii Hist. Florent. p. 253. In his Facetiæ, Poggio relates the following inſtance, which occurred during the courſe of this conteſt, of the free-

When the pontiff had declared his readineſs to interpoſe his good offices between the contending powers, for the reſtoration of peace, the Florentines ſent Leonardo Aretino to the Roman court, inveſted with the dignity of embaſſador of the Tuſcan republic.*(a)* In the nomination of their repreſentative, they gratified the wiſhes of Martin V. who had long entertained a great reſpect for Leonardo, and had in vain attempted, by the offer of conſiderable preferment, to induce him to enter into his ſervice.*(b)* So highly did Leonardo's conſtituents approve

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dom of ſpeech in which Filippo Maria permitted one of his domeſtics to indulge himſelf.

" The old duke of Milan, a prince in all reſpects of ſingular good taſte, " had an excellent cook, whom he had ſent to France to learn the art of dreſsing " nice diſhes. In the great war which he carried on againſt the Florentines, he " one day received ſome bad news, which gave him a good deal of uneaſineſs. " Soon after the arrival of this intelligence, he ſat down to dinner. The diſhes " not at all pleaſing him, he ſent for his cook, and reproved him ſeverely for " his unſkilfulneſs. The cook, who was accuſtomed to take great liberties with " his maſter, replied, I can aſsure your highneſs that the diſhes are excellently " dreſsed—and if the Florentines have taken away your appetite, how am I to " blame ?"

Poggii Opera, p. 425.

This anecdote proves that Filippo inherited from his father a fondneſs of good living, and alſo intimates, that even at this early period, our Gallic neighbours were noted for their ſkill in cookery.

(a) Mehi Vita Leonardi Aretini, p. xliv.

(b) Ibid.

prove of his conduct in his diplomatic capacity, that immediately after his return to Florence, in the latter end of the year 1427, they appointed him to fill the honourable and lucrative office of Secretary or Vicechancellor of the Florentine ſtate. If credit may be given to his own aſsertion in a letter to Feltrino Boiardo, he accepted this dignity with reluctance, and lamented the imperious neceſsity, which compelled him, from a ſenſe of duty, to relinquiſh the pleaſures of literary retirement, for the cares incident to a public ſtation.*(a)* His reluctance is, however, otherwiſe accounted for in an epiſtle which Poggio wrote to him on this occaſion, and from which it appears, that when the office in queſtion was firſt offered to his acceptance, it was propoſed that the ſalary uſually attached to it ſhould be diminiſhed; but that on his refuſal to accept it on thoſe conditions, the adminiſtrators of the government agreed to confer upon him the full emoluments which had been received by preceding Vicechancellors, to which terms he acceded. When Poggio was informed that his friend was eſtabliſhed in his new office, he congratulated him by letter on this acceſsion to his civic honours, which, however, he obſerved, was, like matrimony, likely to be attended with conſiderable difficulty, trouble, and uneaſineſs.*(b)*

(a) Mehi Vita Leonardi Aretini, p. xliv.

(b) "Volui ſatisfacere amori in te meo, et tecum congratulari, quemadmodum ſolemus ei, qui uxórem duxit, cum onus ſubeat grave, difficile et molestum."

Poggii Epistolæ lvii. *p.* 167.

The ſatisfaction which Martin V. experienced in witneſsing the peaceful and happy condition of that portion of Chriſtendom, the civil intereſts of which were entruſted to his immediate care, was not a little allayed by the contumacy and rebellion of the Bohemian reformers. Theſe high ſpirited men had been fired with indignation, when they were informed of the ſad cataſtrophe of their beloved apoſtles, John Huſs, and Jerome of Prague. The cenſures of the church, which were fulminated againſt their opinions, they treated with contempt. Taking advantage of the weakneſs of Winceſlaus their king, they poſſeſsed themſelves of ſeveral churches in Prague and its environs, where they cauſed the communion to be adminiſtered in both kinds, and openly defied the pope, the emperor, and the council of Conſtance. Upon the death of Winceſlaus, their confidence in their ſtrength, and the ardour of their zeal, impelled them to riſk a conteſt with the power of Sigiſmund his ſucceſsor. Led on by the intrepid Ziſca, they encountered danger without fear; and in the ſhock of battle, their impetuoſity was irreſiſtible. For the ſpace of four years, the military talents of their favourite commander diſcomfited the armies of the emperor, who was at length reduced to the mortifying neceſsity of entering into a treaty with a man, whom he could regard in no other light than as an obſtinate infidel, and a rebellious ſubject. This treaty was interrupted by the death of Ziſca, who was cut off by the plague, on the ſixth of October, 1424, at the caſtle of Priſcow. After the death of this formidable antagoniſt,

antagoniſt, Sigiſmund, in hopes that the courage of the Bohemians would expire with their chieftain, again appealed to arms. But he was diſappointed in his expectations. Great occaſions produce great men. The heretics choſe as the ſucceſsor of Ziſca, Procopius, an officer whoſe valour and ſkill they had frequently ſeen put to the proof. Procopius maintained the conteſt with courage, conduct, and ſucceſs, and worſted the imperial forces in various engagements. The intelligence of theſe continued diſaſters filled the mind of the pontiff with vexation. Reſolving to aid the emperor with the temporal and ſpiritual power of the church, he proclaimed a cruſade againſt the heretics, and ſent a commiſsion to cardinal Beaufort, authorizing him, in quality of legate, to wield the ſword of the church, and chaſtiſe her rebellious ſons. This commiſsion was by no means diſagreeable to the turbulent ſpirit of Beaufort. In purſuance of the inſtructions which he received from the pontiff, he appropriated to the purpoſes of the cruſade, a tenth part of the revenues which accrued from England to the Roman ſee.(a) With this money

(a) It ſhould ſeem that Humphrey, duke of Glouceſter, who at this time governed the kingdom of England in quality of Protector, regarded this commiſsion of the cardinal's with a jealous eye. With a view of preventing the miſchiefs which might enſue upon the exerciſe of foreign authority in the Engliſh dominions, he ſummoned Beaufort into his preſence, and by a formal and expreſs act, which ſet forth, that the legates of the pope had never been permitted to enter into England, except by ſummons, invitation, or permiſsion of the king, which ſummons, invitation, or permiſsion, Beaufort had not received, proteſted againſt his exerciſing the authority of legate in the king's dominions in any form or manner whatever. To this proteſtation Beaufort put in

money he raiſed an army of four thouſand men, at the head of which he encamped in the neighbourhood of Dover, waiting for a favourable wind to paſs over to Flanders. Here he received letters from the duke of Gloucester, regent of the kingdom, requeſting him to tranſport his troops into France, and march to the aſſiſtance of the duke of Bedford, who was at that time hard preſsed by the Dauphin. In compliance with the regent's requeſt, Beaufort repaired with his army to Paris, whence he ſoon afterwards

A. D. 1429.

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a formal anſwer, that it was not his intention in any thing to derogate from, or contravene the rights, privileges, liberties, or cuſtoms of the king or kingdom. This proteſt was made, November 11th, 1428. It is printed in the appendix to Brown's *Faſciculus Rerum expetendarum et Fugiendarum*, p. 618, from an ancient regiſter, formerly in the poſſeſsion of archbiſhop Sancroft.

For the purpoſe of raiſing money to defray the expenſe of the cruſade, boxes emblazoned with the ſign of the croſs, were fixed in the churches, in which the friends of the true faith were exhorted to depoſit their contributions. To give additional ſtimulus to the zeal of the pious, the pontiff iſſued a bull, whereby he granted an indulgence of one hundred days to thoſe who ſhould attend the preaching of the cruſade—a full pardon of all their ſins, and an aſsurance of eternal happineſs, to thoſe who took the croſs and ſerved againſt the heretics at their own expenſe. The ſame premium was offered to thoſe, who fully intending to perform this meritorious ſervice, ſhould happen to die before they joined the army; and to thoſe who ſhould ſend a ſoldier or ſoldiers to fight, at their expenſe, in propagation of the true faith. This latter proviſion was particularly addreſsed to the women, who were graciouſly informed by the cardinal, that thoſe females, who, being prevented by their poverty from maintaining each a warrior at their own expenſe, ſhould enter into a joint ſubſcription for the purpoſe, ſhould be entitled to conſiderable privileges; and ſo grateful was his holineſs even for the gift of good wiſhes, that he granted ſixty day's indulgence to thoſe who faſted and prayed in order to promote the ſucceſs of the expedition.

Appendix to Brown's Faſciculus, p. 621, 625, 630.

afterwards proceeded into Bohemia. The terrors of the cruſade, thus aided by the power of the cardinal legate, did not diſmay the heretics, who ruſhed to the combat with unabated fury, and routed the army of the church. The pontiff, ſenſibly mortified by this diſaſter, and attributing the ill ſucceſs of his arms to the imprudence of Beaufort, recalled that haughty prelate, ſubſtituting in his place Bartolomeo da Piacenza. The new legate was not more fortunate than his predeceſſor. The orthodox army ſtill continued to experience a ſeries of defeats. Hoping that a change of his repreſentative might effect a change in the fortune of his arms, Martin ſuperſeded Bartolomeo da Piacenza, and committed the direction of the war to Giuliano Cæſarino, cardinal of St. Angelo.*(a)*

This was one of the laſt acts of the pontificate of Martin V. who died on the 20th of February, 1431. Though this pontiff was unable to accompliſh the extinction of hereſy, he had the good fortune to witneſs the termination of the famous ſchiſm of the Weſt. Benedict XIII. dying at Paniſcola in the year 1424, two cardinals who had adhered to him in the midſt of his misfortunes, at the inſtance of Alfonſo of Arragon, elected as his ſucceſſor the Canonico Egidio of Barcelona, who accepting

Feb. 20th. A. D. 1431.

(a) *Hollinshed's Chronicle, vol.* ii. *p.* 602.—*Stowe's Annals, p.* 371.—*Platina, p.* 400.

accepting the empty title beſtowed upon him by this diminutive conclave, aſsumed the appellation of Clement VII. But ſoon after this tranſaction, Martin, having compoſed his differences with Alfonſo, ſent a legate into Spain, who eaſily perſuaded Egidio, in conſideration of the gift of the biſhopric of Majorca, to abdicate the vain honours which rendered him ridiculous, and to renounce all claim to the pontifical dignity. In order to prevent the cardinals who had placed the tiara on the head of Egidio, from again diſturbing the peace of the church by proceeding to a new election, the Italian legate cauſed them to be arreſted and thrown into priſon.*(a)*

Thus were the latter days of Martin V. paſsed in a ſtate of tranquillity, which was diſturbed only by the rumours of the diſtant war in Bohemia, and by a tranſitory revolt of the citizens of Bologna, who after a feeble attempt to vindicate their freedom, were ſoon reduced to their wonted ſubjection. The pontifical court, no longer doomed to the viciſsitudes and inconveniencies of a frequent change of reſidence, was permanently eſtabliſhed at Rome; and its members were enabled to form and to execute plans, the accompliſhment of which required the maturing operation of time. Poggio took advantage of this period of domeſtic quiet to proſecute his ſtudies. He was now deeply engaged in the compoſition and correction

(a) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 136.—*Platina, p.* 401.

rection of various works, and among the reſt, of his dialogue on Avarice, which he ſubmitted to the public inſpection in the year 1429. In the prefatory addreſs to A. D. 1429.
Franceſco Barbaro, which is prefixed to this dialogue, he intimates, that he had not yet made a ſufficient progreſs in the Greek language, to be able to preſent to the public what was at that time held in the higheſt eſtimation—a verſion of any of the Grecian claſsics; but at the ſame time expreſses his hopes, that this his firſt eſsay may be deemed not altogether deſtitute of merit. It ſhould ſeem however, that it was not without conſiderable diffidence that Poggio ventured to expoſe this production to the ordeal of public opinion. His diffidence was encreaſed by the cool reception, and even diſapprobation which it experienced from Niccolo Niccoli, to whoſe inſpection it was firſt ſubmitted, and who without reſerve declared his opinion that it was by no means worthy of the known talents of its author.*(a)* Encouraged however by the flattering encomiums of Franceſco Barbaro, and others of his literary friends, to whom he had communicated his manuſcript, and emboldened by the conſciouſneſs which he felt, that when compared with the productions of the times, his dialogue was poſſeſsed of conſiderable merit, he yielded to the ſuggeſtions of ſcholaſtic ambition; and by its publication proclaimed himſelf a candidate for the laurel of literary fame.*(b)*

(a) Poggii Epiſtolæ lvii. *p.* 173.

(b) Ibid. p. 178.—*Ambroſii Traverſarii Opera, tom.* ii. *p.* 978.

In the introduction to the dialogue on Avarice, Poggio intimates that Antonio Luſco, Cincio, and others of the pope's ſecretaries, paying a viſit to Bartolomeo di Montepulciano, the converſation after ſupper turned upon the character of Bernardino,(a) a famous preacher who was at that time exerciſing his talents at Rome. After a very favourable teſtimony to this preacher's merits on the part of Luſco, Cincio obſerves, "In one reſpect both "Bernardino and other preachers of the ſame deſcripti- "on ſeem to me to fall into an error. They do not "preach with a view of doing good, but for the purpoſe "of

(a) This Bernardino had for ſome time preached with uncommon applauſe to crowded audiences in the churches of Florence. The talents of a popular orator generally procure their poſſeſſor as many enemies as friends. Several eccleſiaſtics, who were envious of the reputation of Bernardino, took advantage of a daring flight of rhetoric, into which he was betrayed by the enthuſiaſm of his zeal, to endeavour to accompliſh his ruin. In order to enforce his eloquence, in deſcribing ſome impreſſive ſcene, (probably the ſufferings of Chriſt) he exhibited to the people a picture, in which the tranſaction to which he alluded was delineated. Of this exhibition his detractors complained to the pope, as a kind of profanation of the rites of the church; and Bernardino was obliged to repair to Rome to vindicate his cauſe. Though the pontifical court was inflamed with prejudice againſt him, by the artifices of his accuſers, ſo captivating was his eloquence, that when he was permitted to preach in Rome, the eccleſiaſtics of the higheſt eminence, as well as the populace, being attracted by his fame to hear his diſcourſes, liſtened to him with enthuſiaſtic admiration. Martin V. commanding him to abſtain for the future from the exhibition of pictures, he readily complied with his injunctions, and by his prompt obedience obtained the favour of the pontiff, who during the remainder of his life treated him with diſtinguiſhed kindneſs.

Ambroſii Traverſarii Epiſt. lib. ii. *ep.* xl. xli.

"of displaying their eloquence. They are not so "anxious to cure the mental diseases which they profess "to heal, as to obtain the favour and applause of the "mob. They learn a few phrases by heart, and utter "them indiscriminately before audiences of every de- "scription. Treating of recondite, and obscure matters, "they soar beyond the comprehension of the vulgar, "and tickle the ears of women and fools, whom they "dismiss as ignorant as they found them. Some vices "they reprove in such a manner that they seem rather to "teach, than to correct them, and in their thirst for "gain, they forget the promotion of the cause of reli- "gion."

After various other observations have been made on the defects of the preachers of that time, Bartolomeo remarks, that though luxury and avarice are the most copious sources of vice, these failings are rarely reprehended from the pulpit; or if at any time they happen to become the subject of clerical animadversion, they are treated in a dry, jejune and ludicrous manner, without dignity of thought or energy of expression. He therefore proposes that the company then assembled should, in a friendly conversation, enter into a discussion of the nature of these vices. To this proposal Lusco assents, expressing, however, his opinion, that it will be advisable for them to confine themselves to the subject of Avarice. While they are arranging the order in which they are to deliver their sentiments, they are joined by Andrew of

Conſtantinople, a man of great erudition, and the moſt reſpectable character. After the interchange of the cuſtomary ſalutations, the new gueſt is informed of the propoſed ſubject of diſcourſe, and Bartolomeo proceeds to utter an eloquent invective againſt Avarice. This oration being ended, Luſco replies in extenuation of that vice, and in the courſe of his harangue reprobates the oppoſite error of luxury and extravagance. Luſco's ſpeech diſplays conſiderable ingenuity. The moſt ſtriking paſſages which it contains are levelled againſt the profeſſors of the civil law, and againſt the mendicant friars, both which deſcriptions of men are treated with great ſeverity. Alluding to the latter, Luſco ſays, "Look through the "whole city—the market—the ſtreets—the churches— "and if you can find any body who profeſſes that he "wiſhes for no more than a bare ſufficiency, depend "upon it you have found a prodigious rarity. Do not "cite as inſtances in contradiction to my aſſertion, thoſe "ſlovenly hypocritical vagabonds, who under the pre- "text of religion, get their living without labour, and "make their pretended poverty and contempt of world- "ly things a moſt copious ſource of gain. A well con- "ſtituted ſtate will not encourage theſe lazy rogues, but "it will prefer thoſe citizens who are willing to work "for the benefit of the human race." *(a)*

Andrew

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 19.

Andrew of Conſtantinople, in quality of moderator, replies to Luſco, and points out the diſtinction which the latter had artfully confounded, between a deſire of the good things of life, and Avarice. This deſire, ſays he, if moderate, is virtuous; if immoderate, it degenerates into covetouſneſs, and becomes a vice. He then proceeds to anſwer the arguments of Luſco in regular order. In the courſe of his harangue he takes occaſion to ſtigmatize the avaricious diſpoſition of ſovereign princes, and of the clergy; and in concluſion he ſupports his opinion by various quotations from the fathers and the ancient claſsic authors. The remarks of Andrew meeting the approbation of his auditors, the conference is cloſed. *(a)*

In the ſentiments of diſapprobation with which the good taſte of Poggio led him to regard the harangues of the popular preachers of his time, he is ſupported by the weighty ſuffrage of Tiraboſchi. "Some of the ſacred "orators of the fifteenth century," ſays that judicious critic,

(a) In the original ſketch of this dialogue, Poggio had attributed the firſt part of the attack on Avarice to Cincio, one of the apoſtolic ſecretaries; but on the admonition of Luſco, that as Cincio had the reputation of being a covetous man, an invective againſt that vice would be out of character if repreſented as proceeding from him, he ſubſtituted in his place Bartolomeo di Montepulciano. The defence of Avarice he aſsigned to Luſco, becauſe Luſco being generous even to extravagance, there was no reaſon to fear, leſt the imputed patronage of ſo ſelfiſh a paſsion, ſhould be ſuppoſed to convey an implied impeachment of his character.

Ambroſii Traverſarii Opera, tom. ii. *lib.* xxv. *epiſt.* xliii.

critic, " are mentioned with praiſe, not merely by vul-
" gar and unpoliſhed, but alſo by the moſt cultivated
" writers. On the other hand we have an opportunity
" of inſpecting the diſcourſes of theſe ſame orators;
" and generally ſpeaking, we cannot ſee in them the
" ſhadow of that eloquence for which they are ſo high-
" ly commended. Let any one read the ſermons of S.
" Bernardino da Siena, Fra Roberto da Lecce, B. Al-
" berto da Sarziano, Fra Michele da Carcano, and of
" many others, who, as the writers of that age inform
" us, attracted whole cities and provinces to hear them;
" and then judge whether they deſerve the character of
" eloquent orations. They are generally nothing more
" than dry treatiſes on ſcholaſtic points, or on matters of
" theological morality, full of quotations from ſacred
" and profane authors, where we ſee coupled together
" St. Auguſtine and Virgil, Chryſoſtom and Juvenal.
" The force of their eloquence conſiſts in ſome exclama-
" tions, to which is ſometimes joined a deſcription of
" the vices of the times, which would now excite the
" moſt immoderate laughter, but which then cauſed the
" audience to melt into tears."*(a)*

The

(a) Tiraboschi Storia della Letteratura Italiana, tom. vi. *part* 2*d. p.* 363. Poggio has recorded a notable ſtory of one of theſe indiſcreet orators, who in the fervour of a declamation againſt the vice of adultery, declared, that he had ſuch a deteſtation of that offence, that he had much rather commit the ſin of unchaſtity with ten virgins than with one married woman.

Poggii Opera, p. 433.

The friars whom Poggio ſatirizes with ſuch ſeverity in his dialogue on Avarice, were a branch of the order of Franciſcans, who, on account of the extraordinary ſtrictneſs with which they profeſſed to exerciſe their conventual diſcipline, were diſtinguiſhed by the title of *Fratres Obſervantiæ*. The founder of this new ſubdiviſion of the eccleſiaſtical orders, was the abovementioned Bernardino of Siena, who appears by the teſtimony of Poggio to have been a man of great virtue and of conſiderable talents. Several of his diſciples, however, who were not endued either with his good principles or his abilities, emulous of the reputation which he had acquired by preaching, began alſo to harangue the people from the pulpit.

Of theſe ſelf-conſtituted inſtructors Poggio has drawn the following ſtriking picture. "Inflated by the pretended inſpiration of the holy ſpirit, they expound the ſacred ſcriptures to the populace, with ſuch groſs ignorance, that nothing can exceed their folly. I have often gone to hear them for the ſake of amuſement; for they were in the habit of ſaying things, which would move to laughter the graveſt and moſt phlegmatic man on the face of the earth. You might ſee them throwing themſelves about, as if they were ready to leap out of the pulpit; now raiſing their voices to the higheſt pitch of fury—now ſinking into a conciliatory whiſper—ſometimes they beat the deſk with their hands—ſometimes they laughed, and in the courſe

"of

" of their babbling, they aſsumed as many forms as Pro-
" teus. Indeed they are more like monkeys than preach-
" ers, and have no qualification for their profeſsion, ex-
" cept an unwearied pair of lungs." *(a)*

Though the impudence of theſe men, which was equal to their folly, diſguſted people of good ſenſe, they had numerous partizans and admirers among the populace. Elated by their ſucceſs, they arrogated to themſelves conſiderable conſequence. Some of them in the pride of their hearts ſcorned to hold inferior ſtations in the convents in which they were eſtabliſhed, and ſolicited the erection of new monaſteries, of which their ambition prompted them to expect to become the ſuperiors. Scandalized by theſe irregularities, the aſsertors of diſcipline ſummoned an aſsembly of the brothers of the Franciſcan order from every province of Italy, for the purpoſe of remedying

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(a) Appendix ad Fasciculum Rer. Expet. et Fug. p. 578. Poggio has commemorated in his *Facetiæ*, a mortifying explanation which one of theſe noiſy orators provoked by his overweening vanity. " A monk," ſays he, " preaching " to the populace, made a moſt enormous and uncouth noiſe, by which a good " woman, one of his auditors, was ſo much affected, that ſhe burſt into a flood " of tears. The preacher, attributing her grief to remorſe of conſcience, ex-" cited within her by his eloquence, ſent for her, and aſked her why ſhe was ſo " piteouſly affected by his diſcourſe. Holy father, anſwered the mourner, I " am a poor widow, and was accuſtomed to maintain myſelf by the labour of " an aſs, which was left me by my late huſband. But alas! my poor beaſt is " dead, and your preaching brought his braying ſo ſtrongly to my recollection, " that I could not reſtrain my grief."

Poggii Opera, p. 479.

remedying theſe evils which were likely to bring diſgrace upon their fraternity. This aſsembly, which conſiſted of eighty members, decreed, that a general chapter of their order ſhould be held on the enſuing feaſt of Pentecoſt—that in the interim, ſix only of the friars ſhould be allowed to preach—and that no new convent ſhould be erected for the accommodation of the Franciſcans, till the pleaſure of the abovementioned general chapter ſhould be known. The taſk of drawing up theſe decrees was aſsigned to Poggio—a taſk which it may be preſumed he undertook with pleaſure and executed with fidelity. The mortified preachers and their partizans, imagining that Poggio was not only the regiſtrer, but the author of theſe unwelcome reſtrictions, inveighed againſt his conduct with great bitterneſs. Soon after the publication of the abovementioned decree, Carlo Ricaſcolo, a devout citizen of Florence, preſented to the *Fratres Obſervantiæ* a ſmall eſtate pleaſantly ſituated in the neighbourhood of Arezzo. On this eſtate the friars immediately began, in defiance of the prohibition ſo lately iſsued by the heads of their order, to lay the foundations of a new monaſtery. Poggio thought it his duty to repreſent this act of contumacy to the pontiff, who immediately iſsued orders to the biſhop of Fieſole to put a ſtop to the proſecution of the building. This circumſtance ſtill farther excited againſt Poggio the animoſity of the indignant eccleſiaſtics, who induſtriouſly vilified his character, repreſenting him as an enemy of the Chriſtian faith, and a malignant perſecutor of the true believers. Niccolo Niccoli,

with his uſual impetuoſity, gave credit to theſe accuſations, and wrote to Poggio a letter of remonſtrance. To this letter Poggio replied, firſt ſimply ſtating the facts of the caſe, and then proteſting that he was no enemy either to religion or its profeſsors—"on the contrary," ſaid he, "I make a point of behaving with the utmoſt reverence "to thoſe eccleſiaſtics who adorn their religion with vir- "tuous conduct. But," proceeded he, "I have been ſo "often deceived, ſo frequently diſappointed in the good "opinion which I had conceived of men, that I know "not whom or what to believe. There are ſo many "wicked people who conceal their vices by the ſanctity "of their looks, and the humility of their apparel, that "confidence is in a manner deſtroyed. In the pontifical "court we have too many opportunities of becoming ac- "quainted with iniquitous tranſactions, of which people in "general are ignorant. I am not however ſurpriſed," ſays he in the concluſion of his letter, "that theſe friars ſhould "complain of their being prevented from eſtabliſhing "themſelves in ſuch a pleaſant diſtrict. The excellence "of our wine is a powerful allurement, both to ſtrangers "and to our own countrymen. Plato, who was no "Chriſtian, choſe for the ſcite of his academy an un- "healthy ſpot, in order that the mind might gain ſtrength "by the infirmity of the body. But theſe pretended "followers of Chriſt act upon a different ſyſtem. They "ſelect pleaſant and voluptuous places—they ſeek not "ſolitude, but ſociety—they do not wiſh to promote the "cultivation

"cultivation of the mind, but the pampering of the "corporeal appetites."

Theſe ſarcaſms were communicated by Niccolo to Alberto da Sarziano,*(a)* a brother of the Franciſcan order, who was ſo much diſpleaſed by them, that he expoſtulated with Poggio on the alledged impropriety of his conduct, in a long letter, to which the latter replied in a grave ſtrain of irony, defending and confirming the remarks which had been ſo copious a ſubject of animadverſion. Towards the concluſion of his letter, he beſtowed upon his correſpondent the following ſeaſonable advice. "Do you apply yourſelf to your preaching, "and attend to your peculiar province. Leave the

 "building

(a) Alberto derived the deſignation of Da Sarziano, from a ſmall town in Tuſcany where he was born, A. D. 1385. At an early age he enrolled himſelf in the number of the conventuals, and afterwards joined the ſtricter order of the *Fratres Obſervantiæ*. In the year 1424, he went to Verona, where he ſtudied the Greek language under the inſtructions of Guarino Veroneſe. In the following year he paid a viſit to Franceſco Barbaro, who was then governor of Trivigi. Here he met with the famous preacher Bernardino, at whoſe inſtance he undertook the popular employment of an itinerant preacher. In this capacity he not only traverſed a great part of Italy, but croſsing the ſea, he went to preach the true goſpel amongst the ſchiſmatics and infidels of Greece, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Armenia. It was in conſequence of his repreſentations that the patriarch of the laſt mentioned province attended the council of Baſil, when in the name of his countrymen he ſubmitted to the deciſions of the Latin church. Alberto cloſed a life of religious labours in the year 1450, at Milan, where he was interred in the church of St. Angelo. A collection of his works, conſiſting principally of ſermons and theological tracts, was publiſhed at Rome, A. D. 1688.

Tiraboschi Storia della Letter. Ital. tom vi. *p.* 214, 215, 216.

" building of religious houſes to others, and be aſsured, " that whereſoever you are, there you may acceptably " ſerve and worſhip God."

This letter to Alberto, Poggio encloſed in another, which he addreſsed to Ambrogio Traverſari. To the learned monk of Camaldoli, he could venture to write even upon this delicate ſubject, with all the freedom of jocularity. " I cannot help thinking," ſays he, " that " the benevolence of many perſons is too great, who " prefer the public good to their private intereſt; and " who, through their anxiety for the ſalvation of others, " loſe their own ſouls. I could wiſh that theſe men " would retire to woods and deſarts, where they might " attain to the perfection of holy living, rather than " ſettle in ſuch pleaſant places, in which they run ſuch " riſk of falling into temptation. Your favourite St. " Jerome ſays, that it is better and ſafer to be in a ſitu- " ation where it is impoſsible to err, than even to eſcape " from imminent danger. I am afraid ſome people have " too much confidence in their own fortitude. But I " have done.—Let every one bear his own burden.— " Farewell, and pray that your friend Poggio may a- " mend his ways."*(a)*

The

(a) Ambroſii Traverſarii Epiſt. p. 978, 979, 1091, 1125. Poggii Opera p. 317, 318, 319.

The lenient influence of time did not abate the diſlike and contempt which Poggio entertained for thoſe eccleſiaſtics who adopted the religious habit as a convenient cloak for the concealment of indolence or luxury; and who by the mere appearance of extraordinary ſanctity, endeavoured to attain thoſe worldly honours which they affected to deſpiſe. When he was declined into the vale of years, he attacked thoſe peſts of ſociety in a dialogue on Hypocriſy, a compoſition which abounds in the keen ſarcaſms of poliſhed wit, and in acute obſervations on the human character. It is no doubt on account of the boldneſs with which he inveighs againſt the evil practices of pretenders to uncommon ſtrictneſs in the obſervance of religious duties, that the editors of his works have ſuppreſsed this dialogue, which has been preſerved and circulated by the induſtrious zeal of proteſtantiſm.*(a)* The freedom with which he therein ſpeaks of the vices, not merely of individuals, but of whole claſſes of religious hypocrites, is truly aſtoniſhing. The following remonſtrance againſt the folly and wickedneſs of the monaſtic life,

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(a) It is printed in the Appendix to the *Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum et Fugiendarum*; a collection of fugitive tracts intended to diſplay the errors of the church of Rome.

This collection, which was firſt publiſhed at Cologne, A. D. 1535, by Orthuinus Gratius of Deventer, was republiſhed, with conſiderable additions, by Edward Brown, at London, A. D. 1689, at which period the avowed predilection of James II. for the Roman catholic doctrines had given alarm to the zealous proteſtants of England.

life, favours more of the eighteenth, than of the fifteenth century, and is drawn up in the ſpirit of a Gallic *œconomiſte*, rather than in the ſtyle of a ſecretary to the ſovereign pontiff. " I do not wiſh to ſcrutinize into the ſe-
" cret life of theſe cœnobites, which is known to God
" alone. I will not inquire whether they are ſober or
" otherwiſe; whether they are chaſte or unchaſte; whe-
" ther they employ their time in ſtudy, or waſte it in
" idleneſs; whether they are the prey of envy; and
" whether they are continually hunting after preferment.
" It is not ſufficient that they keep within doors, op-
" preſsed with a load of garments, and do no public and
" open miſchief. Let me aſk, of what utility are they to
" the faith, and what advantage do they confer on the
" public? I cannot find that they do any thing but ſing
" like graſshoppers, and I cannot help thinking they
" are too liberally paid for the mere exerciſe of their
" lungs. But they extol their labours as a kind of Her-
" culean taſk, becauſe they riſe in the night to chant
" the praiſes of God. This is no doubt an extraordinary
" proof of merit, that they ſit up to exerciſe themſelves
" in pſalmody. What would they ſay if they roſe to go
" to the plough like farmers, expoſed to the wind and
" rain, with bare feet, and with their bodies thinly clad.
" In ſuch a caſe no doubt the deity could not poſsibly
" requite them for their toil and ſufferings. But it may
" be ſaid, there are many worthy men amongſt them. I
" acknowledge it. It would be a lamentable thing in-
" deed, ſhould there be no good men in ſo vaſt a multi-
" tude.

" tude. But the majority of them are idle, hypocritical, " and deſtitute of virtue. How many do you think enter " upon the religious life through a deſire to amend their " morals? You can recount very few who do not aſ- " ſume the habit on account of ſome extraneous cauſe. " They dedicate, not their minds, but their bodies to de- " votional exerciſes. Many adopt the monaſtic garb on " account of the imbecility of their ſpirits, which pre- " vents them from exerting themſelves to gain an honeſt " livelihood. Some, when they have ſpent their property " in extravagance, enter into religious houſes, becauſe " they think that they ſhall there find a rich paſture; " others are induced to hide in theſe abodes the infamy " which they have contracted by their ignorance, and by " their diſſolute and abandoned courſe of life."

In the ſame dialogue Poggio recounts ſeveral inſtances of artful prieſts abuſing the confidence of auricular confeſsion, for the indulgence of their licentious appetites. He alſo mentions, with due reprobation, a ſet of fanatical profligates, who propagating and acting upon the doctrine, that thoſe who were in a ſtate of grace were made perfect, and could not poſsibly commit ſin, had lately debauched a conſiderable number of women in the city of Venice.

In modern times, enthuſiaſts have the audacity, whilſt they make a public acknowledgment of groſs violations of the duties of morality, to proclaim their confidence, that

that their ſins are forgiven, and to declare their firm perſuaſion, that whatever may be the complexion of their future conduct, they cannot forfeit the favour of the Almighty. Though it would be unjuſt to charge theſe men with an imitation of the actions of the ſanctimonious Venetians, whoſe vile deeds are recorded by Poggio, certain it is, that their principles, if carried into practice, would grant a licenſe even to theſe flagrant acts of wickedneſs. Thus, in the wide circle of immorality, there is a point, where the extreme of enthuſiaſm and the extreme of libertiniſm meet together. When Reaſon is ſhaken from her throne, the paſsions make even Religion herſelf the promoter and the inſtrument of vice.

CHAP. V.

EUGENIUS IV. raiſed to the pontificate—His perſecution of the Colonnas—He offends the duke of Milan—Ill ſucceſs of the pontifical army in Germany—Poggio foreſees the diſaſters of the papal troops—His conſolatory letter to cardinal Julian—Julian's anſwer—Poggio's reply—Angelotto, cardinal of St. Mark—Meeting and proceedings of the council of Basil—Poggio attempts to perſuade Julian to deſert the council—Violent proceedings of that aſsembly againſt the pontiff—The eccleſiaſtical ſtates invaded by Franceſco Sforza and Niccolo Fortebraccio—Poggio again attempts to gain Julian over to the interests of the pontiff—Eugenius accedes to the wishes of the council—Inſurrection in Rome—Flight of Eugenius—Poggio taken captive, and obliged to ransom himself by a ſum of money—He repairs to Florence.

CHAP. V.

ON the death of Martin V. Gabriello de' Condolmieri, a Venetian, of an ancient, though not of a noble family, was elevated to the pontifical dignity. During his reſidence in his native country, Gabriello had not obtained any high eccleſiaſtical honours; but being perſuaded to repair to Rome under the protection of a nephew of his countryman Gregory XII. he ſo ſkilfully inſinuated himſelf into the good graces of that pontiff, that by his favour he was promoted to the lucrative office of treaſurer of the holy ſee; and ſucceſsively advanced to the epiſcopal throne of Siena, and to the dignity of Cardinal of St. Clement. Having conducted himſelf with ſingular ſpirit and ſteadineſs in the execution of various important commiſsions with which he was entruſted by Gregory XII. and his ſucceſsors, he daily encreaſed in reputation; and on the vacancy of the pontifical chair, occaſioned by

March 3d. A. D. 1431. the demiſe of Martin V. he was raiſed by the vote of the conclave, to the ſummit of eccleſiaſtical preferment. On this occaſion, in compliance with the eſtabliſhed cuſtom, he changed his name, and aſsumed the appellation of Eugenius IV.*(a)*

During the courſe of the fifteenth century, the peace of moſt of the cities of Italy was continually diſturbed by the intrigues of rival families, who diſputed with each other the diſtribution of municipal honours, and the poſſeſsion of civic power. On the acceſsion of Eugenius, the contentions of the Colonnas and the Orſini, who had long preſided at the head of oppoſite factions, ſtill gave riſe to diſorder and tumult in Rome. The new pontiff had no ſooner aſcended the chair of St. Peter, than the chiefs of the latter family directed his attention to the great wealth which their competitors had amaſsed, in conſequence of the partiality which his predeceſsor had ſhewn towards his kinſmen, in the diſtribution of the honours and emoluments which were at the diſpoſal of the head of the church. The avarice of Eugenius was ſtimulated by their ſuggeſtions, and he cauſed Ottone, the nephew of Martin V. and others, whom the deceaſed pope had enriched with the honours of the holy ſee, to be arreſted, with circumſtances of aggravated indignity. With ſuch unſparing ſeverity did the pontiff proceed

(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 142.—*Platina p.* 402.

ceed againſt thoſe who had been elevated to places of honour and profit, by the favour of his predeceſsor, that more than two hundred perſons employed by Martin V. in various offices, were, under the colour of juſtice, put to death by the hands of the executioner. The ſagacity of Poggio, who was a witneſs of theſe cruel tranſactions, clearly foreſaw the evil conſequences which were likely to reſult from the pontiff's involving himſelf in party diſputes, by becoming the inſtrument of the hatred of the Orſini in perſecuting the houſe of Colonna.*(a)* The diſtractions of civil tumult ſoon demonſtrated the juſtice of his apprehenſions. The Colonnas, flying from Rome, ſolicited the aſsiſtance of their powerful relatives and friends, who reſided in various parts of Italy. Having collected a ſufficient body of troops, they marched to Rome; and being admitted into the city through the Appian gate by ſome of their partizans, they directed their courſe to the Piazza Colonna, where they were met by the ſoldiers of the pope. After a fierce encounter, the aſſailants were compelled to retire. Being thus fruſtrated in their attempt to make themſelves maſters of the city by open force, they endeavoured to accompliſh their purpoſe by treachery. The vigilance of Eugenius however rendered their deſigns abortive. Having received intelligence that the archbiſhop of Benevento, the ſon of Antonio Colonna, and Maſio his brother, were meditating ſome deſperate

(a) *Poggii Epiſtolæ* lvii. *ep.* xxiii.

deſperate enterprize, he cauſed them to be apprehended. Maſio being put to the torture, confeſsed that they had laid a plan to ſeize the caſtle of St. Angelo, and to baniſh the pope and the Orſini from Rome. This treaſonable project the unfortunate youth expiated by his death. He was beheaded in the Campo di Fiore, and his quarters were ſuſpended to public view in four of the moſt frequented ſtreets of the city. Soon after this event, the heart of Eugenius being mollified by a dangerous ſickneſs, he became weary of the violence and hazard of civil ſtrife; and by the medium of Angelotto Foſco, a citizen of Rome, he intimated to the Colonnas, that he was diſpoſed to agree to a pacification. The terms of this pacification being ſettled, and ſolemnly proclaimed on the twenty-ſecond of September, Rome once more enjoyed the bleſsing of domeſtic tranquillity.*(a)*

Sept. 22d. A. D. 1431.

Thus did the imprudent avarice of Eugenius, on his acceſsion to the chair of St. Peter, expoſe his capital to the miſeries of civil diſcord. At the ſame time he raſhly run the hazard of involving himſelf in a war with Filippo Maria, the duke of Milan. After the concluſion of the peace of Ferrara, that crafty prince, with a view of inducing his moſt formidable antagoniſts to exhauſt their ſtrength, had encouraged the Florentines to attack the territories

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(a) Platina, p. 402, 403.—Muratori Annali. tom. ix. p. 143.—Poggii Historia de varietate Fortunæ, p. 100.

territories of the republic of Lucca, which had incurred the hatred of the Tuſcans by the ſtrenuous aſsiſtance which it had afforded to the duke in the late war. But while he profeſsed to deſert his former allies, Filippo ſecretly ordered the Genoeſe, over whom he exerciſed an almoſt abſolute authority, to march to the relief of the city of Lucca, which the Florentines had reduced to extremity. In obedience to his injunctions, the Genoeſe ſent into the Luccheſe territories a conſiderable body of troops under the command of Piccinino, who compelled the Tuſcan general to raiſe the ſiege of the capital, and entirely routed his army. When the Florentines were apprized of the ſecret machinations of the duke of Milan, they renewed their alliance with the Venetians: and on the other hand, the duke openly declaring himſelf in favour of the republic of Lucca, ſtrengthened himſelf by the aſsiſtance of the Sieneſe. Such was the ſtate of affairs in the weſtern diſtricts of Italy, when Eugenius was called to aſcend the pontifical throne. This event was a ſubject of great joy to the Florentines, who hoped that the partiality of the new pontiff to his countrymen, their allies, would induce him to take deciſive meaſures in their favour. Nor were they diſappointed. Soon after his acceſsion, Eugenius ſent a legate to Siena, with inſtructions to endeavour to prevail upon the adminiſtrators of that republic to deſert the cauſe of the duke of Milan. At the ſame time he ſent to the Tuſcan army a reinforcement of one thouſand horſe, which ſeaſonable acceſsion of ſtrength,

ſtrength, enabled the Florentines once more to commence the ſiege of Lucca.(a)

The duke of Milan did not deem it expedient inſtantly to reſent theſe proceedings of the pontiff: but the edge of his anger was not blunted by time, and when a convenient opportunity preſented itſelf, he convinced Eugenius to his coſt, that it is the height of folly gratuitouſly to interfere in the diſputes of belligerent ſtates.

The pontificate of Eugenius did not commence with happier omens in the diſtant provinces of Chriſtendom. He had confirmed the commiſsion of his predeceſsor, which authorized Julian, cardinal of St. Angelo, to exerciſe in Germany the office of legate of the holy ſee: and in purſuance of this commiſsion, the cardinal had laboured with unremitting activity for the extinction of hereſy. The Bohemian reformers however ridiculed his paſtoral admonitions, and deſpiſed his menaces. During his reſidence in Conſtance, Poggio had witneſsed in the caſe of two individuals, the intrepidity with which the human mind is inſpired by the operation of religious zeal; and he ſeems to have wiſely calculated the effects which this powerful ſtimulus was likely to produce, by diffuſing its encreaſing energy through the breaſts of an enthuſiaſtic multitude. On this account, when he was informed of the

(a) *Poggii Histor. Flor. lib.* vi.

the important enterprise which had been undertaken by his friend the cardinal, though he applauded the alacrity which he manifested in the discharge of his duty to his spiritual sovereign, he advised him maturely to consider, not the degree of courage with which he was endowed, but the number of troops which he could bring into the field; and bid him beware, lest in attempting to subdue the heretics, he should take a wolf by the ears.*(a)* The event justified the fears of Poggio. A vigorous invasion of Bohemia was meditated by Frederic, marquis of Brandenburg, who had been appointed to the chief command of the ecclesiastical forces;*(b)* but as the success of his plan in a great measure depended on the co-operation of several independent powers, it experienced the usual fate of enterprizes conducted on this most hazardous principle. It had been concerted, that whilst the marquis of Brandenburg made an irruption into the Bohemian territory by the route of Thopa, Albert, duke of Austria, should make a diversion on the side of Moravia. But as some of the confederates had not prepared their forces in due

(a) Te fama est peragrare Germaniam ad apparatum belli contra Böemos. Id quidem laudo; sed considera diligenter, non quantum animi sit tibi ad pugnam, sed quantum virium armorum, ne magis animatus quam armatus in aciem accedas; et barbatum nostrùm cave, ne auribus lupum teneas.

Poggii Epistolæ lvii. *ep.* xxiii.

This letter is dated May 11th, 1431.

(b) L'Enfant Histoire de la guerre des Hussites, tom. i. *p.* 315.

time, the commander in chief was obliged to defer the opening of the campaign beyond the appointed period. In the mean time Albert advanced into Bohemia; but finding himſelf unſupported by his allies, he thought it prudent to retire. The duke of Auſtria had no ſooner withdrawn his forces, than the cardinal, who had at length raiſed an army, conſiſting of forty thouſand cavalry, and nearly an equal number of infantry,*(a)* appeared on the frontiers of Bohemia, where he took and deſtroyed ſeveral towns which had been garriſoned by the reformers. The Bohemians were not however diſcouraged by the number of their foes, but boldly advanced with a determination to give them battle. The papal forces did not await the encounter of theſe formidable antagoniſts. When they were apprized of the approach of the enemy, they were ſeized with a ſudden panic, and in ſpite of the remonſtrances of their general, they fled in the utmoſt diſorder.*(b)* Mortified by this defeat, and deſpairing of being

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(a) Some writers aſsert, that the number of the pontifical troops amounted to ninety, others to one hundred and thirty thouſand men. But the numbers of forces are almoſt always exaggerated.

L'Enfant Histoire de la guerre des Hussites, tom. i. *p.* 317.

(b) Voltaire Annales de l'Empire. We may judge of the precipitancy of the flight of the pontifical army, from the circumſtance of the cardinal's loſing, with the reſt of his baggage, the papal bull which authorized the cruſade, his red hat, and the reſt of his dreſs of ceremony, his croſs and crochet.

L'Enfant ut supra.

being able to ſubdue the heretics by force of arms, the legate determined to try the iſsue of an amicable reference of all diſputed points to the deciſion of the general council, which in purſuance of the ſummons of the late pontiff Martin V. was ſoon to be held in the city of Baſil.*(a)*

When Poggio received the intelligence of the diſcomfiture of the papal army, he thus addreſsed the Cardinal legate, in a conſolatory epiſtle—" I am truly ſorry, " my good father, for the ridiculous and diſgraceful iſsue " of this German expedition, which you had planned and " prepared with ſo much pains and labour. It is aſto- " niſhing that your troops ſhould have been ſo com- " pletely deſtitute of courage, as to fly like hares, terri- " fied by an empty breeze of wind, even before the ene- " my was in ſight. My grief is however alleviated by " the following conſideration, that I not only foreſaw " this event, but foretold it when I laſt had the pleaſure " of converſing with you. On that occaſion I remember " you treated my opinion lightly, and ſaid, that as pro- " phets of evil were generally juſtified by the common

 " courſe

(a) Et cum ex fugâ exercitûs omnes populi Alemaniæ ſupra modum eſsent exterriti et conſternati, videns nullum aliud ſupereſse remedium, animabam et confortabam omnes, ut manerent conſtantes in fide et nihil trepidarent; quoniam ego propter hoc accedebam ad Concilium, ubi convenire debebat univerſalis eccleſia in quo omnino aliquod ſufficiens remedium ad reſiſtendum hæreticis, et ipſos extirpandos reperiretur.—*Vide Epistolam Juliani Cardinalis ad Pontificem Eugenium IV. apud Fasciculum Rerum Expetendarum et Fugiendarum, p. 55.*

" courſe of human things, I prophecied on the ſafe ſide
" when I foreboded diſaſters. I did not however hazard
" a random gueſs at the iſsue of the propoſed expedition;
" but formed a rational conjecture on the ſubject, by
" comparing paſt with preſent circumſtances, and by
" reflecting upon the neceſsary relation of cauſe and ef-
" fect. Impreſsed by theſe ideas, I thought I clearly
" foreſaw an approaching tempeſt: and the occurrences
" of every ſucceeding day, tend to confirm me in my
" opinion. There formerly exiſted Chriſtian kings and
" princes, by whoſe aſsiſtance the church defended her-
" ſelf againſt her enemies; and tempeſt-toſsed as ſhe has
" frequently been, ſhe has hitherto always found ſome
" haven in which ſhe could ſhelter herſelf from the fury
" of the ſtorm. But whither can ſhe now flee without
" incurring the danger of ſuffering ſhipwreck? A com-
" mon inſanity has perſuaded almoſt all men to rejoice
" in our calamities, and to pray for our deſtruction.
" Let us however hope for the beſt, and patiently bear
" the worſt. For my own part I make it my ſtudy in all
" circumſtances, to be reſigned to the will of Provi-
" dence, and to become ſo independent of externals,
" as not to be diſtreſsed by the capriciouſneſs of fortune.
" In my preſent ſituation, indeed, I am not very ob-
" noxious to the malice of that goddeſs, whoſe wrath,
" like the thunderbolt, is directed againſt the high and the
" lofty. But whatever may be her pleaſure, it is cer-
" tainly the trueſt wiſdom not to ſuffer our minds to be
" ſhaken by her impulſe, and not to be too deeply af-
" fected

" fected in our private capacity by the diſtreſses of the
" public. Let us however entreat the Deity not to put
" our wiſdom to theſe ſerious proofs; for we know not
" whether we ſhould be able to practiſe the piety and
" philoſophy which we recommend. I hear that you
" have convoked a council, which is already well at-
" tended. I commend your prudence—you did well, on
" the ill ſucceſs of your arms, to have recourſe to an as-
" ſembly of prieſts, on whom we cannot but have great
" reliance, on account of the uprightneſs of their lives,
" and their zeal to extinguiſh the peſt of hereſy.

" The Germans were formerly a warlike people.—
" They are now ſtrenuous only in eating and drinking,
" and they are mighty in proportion to the wine which
" they can ſwallow. When their caſks are empty, their
" courage muſt needs be exhauſted. On this account I
" am inclined to think, that they ſo ſhamefully deſerted
" their poſts, not through fear of the enemy, whom it
" ſeems they never ſaw, but becauſe proviſions were
" ſcarce in thoſe quarters. You were of opinion, that
" ſobriety conſtituted a part of the ſoldier's duty. But
" if this expedition is to be again attempted, I truſt you
" will change your ſyſtem, and allow that wine conſti-
" tutes the ſinews of war. The ancients inform us, that
" Ennius never undertook to celebrate warlike achieve-
" ments till he was mellow; and it muſt be acknow-
" ledged that, inaſmuch as it is a more ſerious taſk to fight
" a battle than to deſcribe it, flowing cups are abſolutely
" requiſite

" requiſite to enable a man to handle arms, and encoun-
" ter the dangers of the field. I am afraid you have
" fallen into the error of judging of others by your own
" diſpoſitions. Beware of repeating this error in the
" matter of the council, and remember what I ſaid to
" you before your departure from Italy—take care to
" feed them well—But enough of this levity. We enjoy
" the bleſsing of peace; but the pontifical court is poor,
" and ſhorn of its ſplendour. This is occaſioned by the
" war in Germany, and by the ſickneſs of his holineſs,
" which has laſted much longer, and has been much
" more ſevere, than could have been wiſhed. I have
" written to Angelotto, cardinal of St. Mark, a letter
" which I wiſh you alſo to read. I therefore ſend you a
" copy of it, not becauſe I flatter myſelf that there is
" any excellence in its ſtyle, but becauſe I truſt its pe-
" ruſal may cauſe you well to weigh your intention of
" ſummoning the council." *(a)*

A mind irritated by diſappointment and diſgrace, is but ill prepared to bear with patience the laſhes of ſatiric wit. The cardinal of St. Angelo was by no means pleaſed with the jocular ſtyle of Poggio's letter; and though he affected to anſwer it in a ſimilar ſtrain of levity, he appears to have written with the ill grace which generally betrays the attempt to conceal reſentment under the veil

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 309, 310.

veil of good humour; and in the courſe of his epiſtle, his vexation burſt forth in an angry reproof of the irregular life of his correſpondent. Unfortunately the morals of Poggio were not entirely free from reproach.—Whilſt the uncertainty of his future deſtination had prevented him from entering into the married ſtate, his paſſions had gained the maſtery over his principles, and he had become the father of a ſpurious offspring. Reminding him of this circumſtance, "you have children," ſaid the cardinal, "which is inconſiſtent with the obligations "of an eccleſiaſtic; and by a miſtreſs which is diſcredita-"ble to the character of a layman." To theſe reproaches Poggio replied in a letter replete with the keeneſt ſarcaſm. He pleaded guilty to the charge which had been exhibited againſt him, and candidly confeſsed, that he had deviated from the paths of virtue. "I might anſwer to your "accuſation," ſaid he, "that I have children, which "is expedient for the laity; and by a miſtreſs, in confor-"mity to the cuſtom of the clergy from the foundation "of the world. But I will not defend my errors—you "know that I have violated the laws of morality, and I "acknowledge that I have done amiſs." Endeavouring however to palliate his offence—"do we not," ſays he, "every day, and in all countries, meet with prieſts, "monks, abbots, biſhops, and dignitaries of a ſtill "higher order, who have families of children by marri-"ed women, widows, and even by virgins conſecrated "to the ſervice of God? Thoſe deſpiſers of worldly "things, as they ſtyle themſelves, who travel from place

"to

" to place, clothed in coarſe and vile raiment, with " downcaſt looks, calling on the name of Jeſus, follow " the precept of the apoſtle, and ſeek after that which is " not their own, to uſe it as their own, and ſcorn to hide " their talent in a napkin. I have often laughed at the " bold, or rather impudent profeſsion of a certain Italian " abbot, who waited on Martin V. accompanied by his " ſon, who was grown up to man's eſtate. This audaci- " ous eccleſiaſtic, being interrogated on the ſubject, free- " ly and openly declared, to the great amuſement of the " pope, and the whole pontifical court, that he had four " other ſons able to bear arms, who were all at his " holineſses ſervice." After noticing other ſcandalous enormities, which brought diſgrace upon the character of ſome eccleſiaſtics of thoſe times, Poggio thus concluded— " As to your advice on the ſubject of my future plans of " life, I am determined not to aſsume the ſacerdotal of- " fice; for I have ſeen many men whom I have regarded " as perſons of good character and liberal diſpoſitions, " degenerate into avarice, ſloth, and diſsipation, in con- " ſequence of their introduction into the prieſthood.— " Fearing leſt this ſhould be the caſe with myſelf, I have " reſolved to ſpend the remaining term of my pilgrimage " as a layman; for I have too frequently obſerved, that " your brethren, at the time of their tonſure, not only " part with their hair, but alſo with their conſcience and " their virtue."*(a)*

Angelotto,

(a) Poggii Epistolæ lvii. *ep.* xxvii.

Angelotto, cardinal of St. Mark, whom Poggio mentions at the concluſion of his conſolatory epiſtle to the cardinal of St. Angelo, was by birth a Roman, and was promoted by Eugenius, from the biſhopric of Cavi, to a ſeat in the ſacred college, on the nineteenth of September, 1431.*(a)* On this addition to his honours, Poggio addreſsed to him a letter, in which he exerciſed the privilege of friendſhip, in adminiſtering much wholeſome and ſeaſonable advice. He introduced his admonitions by obſerving, that it was cuſtomary for the friends of thoſe who had been exalted to any new dignity, to expreſs their congratulations by the tranſmiſsion of magnificent preſents; but that being prevented by his poverty from giving ſuch indications of the ſatisfaction with which he had received the intelligence of Angelotto's promotion, he was determined to beſtow upon him a gift, which he was aſsured he would value at its juſt rate—the gift of friendly counſel. By a variety of inſtances, recorded in the pages of hiſtory, he ſhewed, that he who in compliance with the dictates of duty gives good advice to the great and powerful, runs conſiderable riſk of drawing down upon himſelf the indignation of thoſe whoſe welfare he wiſhes to promote by the free communication of his opinions. In candidly imparting his ſentiments to Angelotto, however, a man of conſiderable learning, who had himſelf been accuſtomed to indulge in the moſt

(a) *Muratori Rer. Italic. Script. tom.* vi. *p.* 869.

unlimited freedom of ſpeech, he declared, that he did not apprehend that he incurred the leaſt danger of giving offence. He then proceeded to exhort the newly created cardinal to continue to cultivate, in his preſent high ſtation, thoſe virtues which he had exhibited in the inferior degrees of eccleſiaſtical preferment; and to act up to the profeſsions which he had been accuſtomed to make before the period of his exaltation. He reminded him of the dangerous temptations which ſurround eminence of rank, and aſsured him, that ſo far from withdrawing any reſtraints to which he had formerly been obliged to ſubmit, his preſent promotion impoſed upon him additional obligations to be prudent and circumſpect in his conduct; ſince the ſplendor of eminence makes the failings and vices of the great the more conſpicuous. Warning his correſpondent againſt the debaſing influence of flattery, he thus apologized for the boldneſs with which he offered his advice. "Thoſe who are not acquainted with me will perhaps "condemn the freedom with which I inculcate theſe "heads of admonition on one who is more fully in-"ſtructed than myſelf on ſuch topics. But I am induc-"ed by my affection for you to recal to your memory "theſe points of duty, in the diſcharge of which, even "the well informed have been ſometimes known to "fail."

If credit may be given to the opinion of Angelotto's contemporaries, Poggio's attempt to inculcate upon him the leſsons of wiſdom, was by no means a ſuperfluous taſk.

taſk. In ſuch ſmall eſtimation was his underſtanding held, that on the day of his election to the dignity of cardinal, a Roman prieſt of the name of Lorenzo, went through the ſtreets of the city, ſhewing indications of the moſt extravagant joy; and being aſked by his neighbours what was the cauſe of his exultation, he replied, "I am "truly fortunate—Angelotto is created cardinal; and "ſince I find fools and madmen are promoted to that "dignity, I have great hopes of wearing the red hat "myſelf."*(a)* On the ſame occaſion, as the officers of the pontifical houſehold were converſing about the tranſactions of the day, one Niccolo of Anagni, a man of great literary accompliſhments, but of an irregular life, and of a very ſatirical diſpoſition, complained of his own ill fortune.—"No perſon living," ſaid he, "is more "unlucky than myſelf; for though this is the reign of "folly, and every madman, nay even Angelotto gains "conſiderable promotion, I alone am paſsed over with-"out notice."*(b)* The friendſhip which Poggio profeſſed to entertain for the newly created dignitary did not prevent him from indulging, at his expenſe, his propenſity to ſarcaſtic wit. A new cardinal is not permitted to take any part in the debates of the conſiſtory till he has obtained the pontiff's permiſsion to ſpeak, which is granted by the performance of a ſhort ceremony, entitled

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(a) Poggii Opera, p. 429.

(b) Ibid.

the opening of his mouth. Poggio one day meeting the cardinal of St. Marcellus in the pontifical palace, aſked him what had been done that morning in the ſacred college. "We have opened Angelotto's mouth," ſaid the cardinal." "Indeed," replied Poggio, "you would have "acted more wiſely if you had fixed a padlock upon "it."*(a)* Theſe anecdotes, which are ſelected from Poggio's *Facetiæ*, ſufficiently prove, that the unfortunate cardinal of St. Mark, was a moſt fruitful ſubject of ridicule to the officers of the Roman court. From the ſame ſource of information it appears, that his churliſh moroſeneſs on the following occaſion ſubjected him to the ſhame of being put to confuſion by the petulant wit of a child. Some of his friends having introduced to him a boy of ten years of age, who was remarkable for the brilliancy of his talents, he aſked him a variety of queſtions, in his anſwers to which the boy diſplayed aſtoniſhing knowledge and ſagacity. On which Angelotto, turning to the bye-ſtanders, ſaid, "They who manifeſt ſuch "quickneſs of parts at this early age, generally decreaſe "in intellect as they increaſe in years, and become fools "when they have attained to maturity." Hurt by the unfeeling rudeneſs of this remark, the ſtripling immediately replied, "If this be the caſe, moſt reverend father, you "muſt have been a very forward youth."*(b)*

In

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 481.

(b) Ibid. p. 475.

In congratulating a man of Angelotto's character on his acceſsion to high eccleſiaſtical honours, Poggio may be ſuſpected of practiſing the duplicity of a courtier. But it may be alledged in his defence, that his letter breathes the ſpirit of freedom; and that though he takes occaſion in general terms to commend the talents and virtues of the new cardinal, his commendations are ſo ſparingly interſperſed in the midſt of a variety of ſalutary hints of advice, that they are evidently introduced for no other purpoſe than to render his admonitions more palatable, and conſequently more uſeful. We have too much reaſon to believe that theſe admonitions were like good ſeed ſown in an unproductive ſoil; and that the conduct of Angelotto, ſubſequent to his elevation to a ſeat in the conſiſtory, reflected diſgrace on himſelf, and on the authors of his promotion.*(a)*

In ſummoning the general council, cardinal Julian had acted in conformity to the powers which had been conferred

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(a) Poggio intimates, that the loquacity of this incorrigible eccleſiaſtic continually betrayed his folly—that he was given to detraction; and that his rapacity frequently betrayed him into violent infringements of the rules of juſtice. He has alſo recorded the following ſevere, but coarſe animadverſion, which was made on his character after his death. "Damnabat quidam multis verbis vitam "et mores Angelotti Cardinalis defuncti. Fuit enim rapax et violentus ut cui "nulla eſset conſcienita. Tum ex aſtantibus unus, Opinor, inquit, diabolum "jam voraſse et cacaſse eum ſæpius ob ſcelera ſua." Alter vir facetiſsimus, "Adeo mala caro ejus fuit, inquit, ut nullus dæmon quantumvis bono ſtomacho, "illam præ nauſeâ comedere auderet."

Poggii Opera, p. 477.

conferred on him by the late, and confirmed by the preſent pontiff;*(a)* but Eugenius, though he did not think it adviſable openly to oppoſe this meaſure, looked forward to the convening of this aſſembly with no ſmall degree of apprehenſion. The popes had always regarded general councils with the jealouſy which monarchs of arbitrary principles uniformly entertain of thoſe conſtitutional bodies, which, under various denominations, have occaſionally attempted to curb the pride of deſpotic authority. In the depoſition of John XXII. the council of Conſtance had eſtabliſhed a moſt dangerous precedent; and when Eugenius reflected upon the power and activity of his enemies, he dreaded the conſequences which might reſult from the aſſembling of a deliberative body, which claimed a ſuperiority over the head of the church. The cardinal of St. Angelo, however, either was not acquainted with the views of the pontiff, or thought it his duty not to ſacrifice the intereſts of the Chriſtian community, to the timidity or ambition of its ſpiritual ſovereign. In compliance with his injunctions, John de Polmar, auditor of the ſacred palace, and John de Raguſio, doctor in theology of the univerſity of Paris, repaired to Baſil on the nineteenth of July, 1431, and opened the council, in the chapter houſe of the cathedral church.*(b)* On the fourteenth of December the firſt ſeſsion was held, at

July 19th. A. D. 1431.

Dec. 14th.

(a) Fasciculus Rer. Expet. et Fugiend. p. 55.

(b) Acta Conciliorum, tom. xxx. p. 25.

at which the cardinal of St. Angelo preſided in perſon, and delivered to the aſsembled eccleſiaſtics an exhortation to labour diligently, and to watch with vigilance for the welfare of the Chriſtian religion. Then were read the decree of the council of Conſtance, touching the ſummoning of general councils; the inſtrument by which the city of Baſil was appointed as a proper place for the holding of ſuch an aſsembly, and various other documents, which eſtabliſhed the legitimacy of the preſent ſynod. It was then publicly declared, that the attention of the council would be directed to three points—the extirpation of hereſy—the prevention of wars amongſt Chriſtians—and the reformation of the church.*(a)*

After the publication of a bull, which thundered an anathema againſt all thoſe who ſhould impede any one in his paſsage to or from the city of Baſil, on the buſineſs of the

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(a) This declaration was made in the following florid terms. "Hæc ſancta "Synodus neceſsitates Chriſtianæ religionis ſedulâ meditatione recogitans, ma- "turâ et digeſtâ deliberatione decernit; ad hæc tria, eo, a quo cuncta bona "procedunt, auctore Deo, toto solicitudinis ſtudio operam dare, Primo, ut om- "nium hæreſum a Chriſtiani populi finibus tenebris profugatis, lumen Catho- "licæ veritatis, Chriſto verâ luce largiente, refulgeat. Secundo, ut bellorum "rabie, quâ, ſatore zizaniæ ſeminante in diverſis partibus mundi affligitur et "diſsipatur populus Chriſtianus, congruâ meditatione ſedatâ, pacis auctore pro- "ſtante in ſtatum reducatur pacificum et tranquillum. Tertio, ut cum multi- "plicibus vitiorum tribulis et ſpinis Chriſti vinea jam quaſi ſilvescat præ nimiâ "denſitate, ut illis debitæ culturæ ſtudio reſecatis, evangelico agricolâ cælitus "operante, refloreat, honeſtateſque fructus et honoris felici ubertate producat."

Concil. tom. xxx. *p.* 39, 40.

the council, and the recital and adoption of ſeveral rules for the regulation of the proceedings of that aſsembly, the firſt ſeſsion was cloſed.(a)

When Eugenius found that he could not prevent the convocation of the dreaded ſynod, he began to deliberate upon the beſt method of preventing thoſe encroachments upon the pontifical prerogatives, which he had ſo much reaſon to apprehend from its decrees, Upon mature conſideration, he did not think it prudent to riſk ſo bold a ſtep as the diſsolution of the council: but he flattered himſelf, that by removing it to ſome city under his own dominion, he would be enabled to control its proceedings and to avert the threatened danger. He therefore iſsued a bull, whereby he commanded the cardinal of St. Angelo to transfer the council from Baſil to Bologna.(b) On the receipt of this bull, the cardinal wrote to Eugenius a long and elaborate letter, in which he endeavoured to perſuade him by every argument which was likely to influence his judgment, and by every appeal to the principles of virtue which was calculated to make an impreſsion on his heart, to withdraw his oppoſition to the proceedings of the council, and to aſsiſt with zeal in its efforts to promote the welfare of the Chriſtian community.(c) The

(a) *Acta Concil. tom.* xxx. *p.* 24—49.

(b) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 148.

(c) See a copy of the cardinal's letter (the good ſenſe and integrity of which are much more commendable than its Latinity) in the *Fasciculus Rer. Expet. et Fug. p. 54 et seq.*

The members of that aſsembly, alſo, ſent deputies to his holineſs, with inſtructions to implore and require him to retract the aforeſaid bull, and by his aſsistance and advice, to ſupport the council in the good work which it had begun. The aſsembled fathers did not however entirely rely upon the perſuaſive eloquence of their embaſſadors. Confiding in the protection of the emperor Sigiſmund, in the ſecond ſeſsion, which was held on the fifteenth of April, 1432, they took very deciſive meaſures for the eſtabliſhment of their authority. With this view they recited and confirmed a decree of the council of Conſtance, wherein it was aſserted, that every Synod, lawfully aſsembled in the holy ſpirit, conſtituting a general council, and repreſenting the church militant, derives its authority immediately from Chriſt, to which all perſons, of what ſtate or dignity ſoever, not excepting the pope, are bound to pay obedience in matters pertaining to the faith, the extirpation of ſchiſm, and the general reformation of the church in its head and members. They alſo iſsued a declaration, that the council then aſsembled, could not legally be diſsolved, prorogued, or transferred to any other place by any power, no not even by the pontifical authority, without the conſent of its members.

April 15th. A. D. 1432.

The deputies who had been ſent to Eugenius, returning without having effected the object of their miſsion, the council, by a public decree, dated April the twenty-ninth, 1432, ſupplicated, required, and admoniſhed the pontiff to revoke the bull of diſsolution with the ſame

April 29th. A. D. 1432.

formality with which it had been publiſhed. By the ſame decree, Eugenius was ſummoned to appear in the council in the ſpace of three months, either in perſon or by deputies furniſhed with full powers to act in his name. He was alſo duly forewarned, that ſhould he refuſe to comply with theſe requiſitions, the council would, according to the dictates of juſtice and the holy ſpirit, provide for the neceſsities of the church, and proceed according to the precepts of divine and human laws.(a) After theſe acts of open hoſtility, prudence dictated to the members of the council, the neceſsity of abridging the influence and authority of their adverſary as much as poſsible; and for this purpoſe, in their fourth ſeſsion, which was held on the twentieth of June, they decreed, that in caſe of a vacancy of the holy ſee, the ſucceſsor to Eugenius ſhould be elected in the place where the council ſhould happen to be ſitting; and that during the exiſtence of that aſsembly, the pope ſhould be prohibited from creating new cardinals.

June 20th. A. D. 1432.

The council proceeded to ſtill more daring extremities. On Sunday, September 6th, after the ſolemnization of the maſs, two procurators of that aſsembly preſented a petition, which ſet forth, that whereas Eugenius, having been regularly ſummoned to revoke the bull which he had iſsued, ordaining the diſsolution of the council, and

Sept. 6th. A. D. 1432.

(a) *Conciliorum, tom.* xxx. *p.* 54.

and alſo to appear in perſon in the ſaid council, within the ſpace of three months, had neglected to obey the ſaid ſummons, but had on the contrary perſiſted in his endeavours to put a ſtop to the proceedings of the legal repreſentatives of the Chriſtian church, they demanded that the ſaid Eugenius ſhould be declared contumelious; and that further proceedings ſhould be had according to law. This petition having been read, the biſhop of Conſtance, who on that day preſided in the aſſembly, commanded the biſhops of Perigord and Ratiſbon, to make inquiſition whether the pope, or any one duly authorized on his behalf were preſent in the council. Theſe prelates accordingly made the requiſite proclamation thrice from the ſteps of the altar, and as many times at the gates of the church. No one appearing to anſwer to this ſummons, a repreſentation of this fact was made to the preſident; after which the archbiſhops of Tarento and Coloſsi, and the biſhop of Magdalon, and Antonio di Santo Vito, auditor of the ſacred palace, entered the aſſembly in quality of deputies of the pope. On inquiry, however, it was found, that they were not provided with the plenary powers demanded by the decrees of the council, in conſequence of which, a proteſtation was made againſt their acts. Being, however, permitted to ſpeak, they exhorted the aſſembled dignitaries, as they wiſhed for the good of the church, to drop theſe harſh proceedings againſt the common father of the faithful. After ſome deliberation, the preſident replied in the name of the council, that the members of that auguſt body would deliberate upon the

matters which had on that day been propoſed to their conſideration; and that they would endeavour to act in ſuch a manner as to obtain the concurrence of the whole Chriſtian world. After thanking the preſident for this gracious anſwer, the deputies of Eugenius withdrew.(a) On the eighteenth of December the council was pleaſed to enlarge the term preſcribed for the ſubmiſsion of Eugenius for the ſpace of ſixty days; and at the ſame time prohibited all eccleſiaſtics or others from attempting to eſtabliſh at Bologna, or elſewhere, any ſynod in oppoſition to the general council then ſitting at Baſil.(b) At the expiration of the abovementioned term of ſixty days, the procurators of the council, on the nineteenth of February, 1433, again demanded ſentence againſt the contumacious pontiff, and were again informed by the preſident, that this important affair would be the ſubject of the future deliberations of the aſsembly.(c) The reſult of theſe deliberations was, that the council, out of its great clemency, indulged Eugenius with the ſtill further ſpace of ſixty days, at the ſame time declaring, that ſhould he not within that time fully and unreſervedly acknowledge and ſubmit to its authority, he ſhould ſtand convicted of notorious contumacy, and ſhould be ſuſpended

(a) *Concilior. tom.* xxx. *p.* 77.

(b) *Ibid. p.* 81.

(c) *Ibid. p.* 92.

pended from the adminiſtration of all pontifical functions, both in ſpirituals and in temporals.*(a)*

It may eaſily be imagined, that theſe violent proceedings of the council, excited no ſmall degree of uneaſineſs in the mind of Eugenius. The pride of the pontiff was wounded by the decree, which pronounced the ſubordination of the papal dignity to the mandate of a collective body, the individual members of which were accuſtomed to proſtrate themſelves before the chair of St. Peter, with the homage of unreſerved ſubmiſsion. His reſentment was rouſed by the denunciation of the puniſhment, which awaited his refuſal to concur in his own humiliation; and when he conſidered the popularity which the council had acquired, in conſequence of the general perſuaſion of the Chriſtian world, that its deliberations would tend to the benefit of the church, his breaſt was agitated by a ſenſe of the danger which he incurred in counteracting its operations. Poggio entered with dutiful zeal into the feelings of his patron, and reſolved to attempt, by friendly admonition and remonſtrance, to perſuade the cardinal of St. Angelo to withdraw his countenance and ſupport from the rebellious eccleſiaſtics of Baſil. With this view he addreſsed to him an elaborate letter, in which he entreated him to conſider, that though in ſummoning the council he was actuated by the moſt upright intentions, and

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(a) Concilior. tom. xxx. *p.* 103 —This decree was paſsed July 13th, 1433.

and by a ſincere deſire to promote the good of the church, yet he was in duty bound to believe, that the pope was influenced by the ſame motives in the formation of his opinion, that ſuch an aſſembly was inexpedient and dangerous. He reminded him, that he was by no means authorized to ſet up his private ſentiments in oppoſition to the deciſion of the head of the church. He further obſerved, that they who began the reformation ſo loudly demanded, by manifeſting their contempt of the pontifical dignity, were the moſt dangerous partizans and promoters of hereſy. He then proceeded ſolemnly to forewarn his friend, that if he perſiſted in his determination, he would forfeit his peace of mind for ever; for he would have the mortification of ſeeing the plans which he had meditated for the benefit of the church, converted into the means of her deſtruction. After aſſuring him that the council was likely to become ſubſervient to the ambition of one ſovereign prince, and to the hatred which another had conceived againſt Eugenius, who was already doomed to depoſition—he thus proceeded—"You "will perhaps ſay, I know nothing of the intentions of "others; but as to myſelf, I am conſcious that I am "prompted by zeal for the promotion of the general "good; and whatever may be the conſequences of the "meaſures which I adopt, the rectitude of my intentions "will ſecure me from blame. But take care my good "friend, leſt you be led aſtray. I know that your in-"tentions are excellent: but I alſo know that you can-"not anſwer for the integrity of your aſſociates. Affairs

may

" may iſsue in a manner directly contrary to your ex-
" pectations. It is a moſt difficult taſk to curb reſent-
" ment, hatred, and avarice; and it is very certain that
" men are corrupted by being freed from ſalutary re-
" ſtraints. When you take into conſideration the dif-
" ferent views by which mankind are actuated, the hopes
" of the public benefit which you expect to derive from
" this council, ſhould not render you inſenſible of the dan-
" ger with which it is attended. You ought therefore to
" dread incurring a weight of reſponſibility by obſtinately
" perſevering in your own opinion. In explaining to the
" pontiff the reaſons which convince you of the expedien-
" cy of ſummoning a council, you have acted as becomes a
" virtuous and prudent man. His holineſs is, however, of
" opinion, that the preſent is not a proper time for the hold-
" ing of ſuch an aſsembly—Do you think it right to main-
" tain your ſentiments by arms and violence? Plato ſays
" that we ought not to bear arms againſt our native country
" or our parents—And who is more truly our parent
" than the earthly repreſentative of our father in Heaven;
" and what country is more dear to us than the church
" in which we are ſaved? You and the pontiff are aim-
" ing at the ſame end, but by different means—Which
" of you ought to give way to the other? Conſider, I
" entreat you, the diſpoſitions and views of thoſe who
" countenance this aſsembly, and you will be convinced
" that they entertain the moſt pernicious deſigns. If
" you do not recede, you will inflict upon the church

" a

" a wound; which, however you may wiſh, you will " be unable to heal."*(a)*

The doctrine of paſsive obedience may be ſeriouſly maintained by thoſe who baſk in the ſunſhine of princely favour, and by thoſe who are pleaſed or ſatisfied with the conduct of the powers that be: for men feel no diſpoſition to reſiſt meaſures which operate to their own advantage, or which they themſelves approve. But when they are required to do that which is ſubverſive of their intereſts, or repugnant to their feelings, they generally find reaſons, to themſelves at leaſt ſatisfactory, for oppoſing the dictates even of long eſtabliſhed authority. So it was with the cardinal of St. Angelo. Dazzled by the ſplendors which beamed around the preſidential throne, he could not ſee the cogency of the reaſons which urged him to forego his newly acquired honours; and the arguments of Poggio had no influence upon his conduct. On the contrary, he deemed it ſtrictly compatible with his duty to the common father of the faithful, ſtill to preſide in the rebellious ſynod, which on the eleventh day of September, again met in ſolemn aſsembly. In this ſeſsion, the procurators of the council, after repreſenting, that notwithſtanding the lenity which had been exerciſed towards Eugenius, in deferring the proceſs which his obſtinacy juſtly merited, the pontiff ſtill refuſed to ſubmit

Sept. 11th. A. D. 1433.

(a) Poggii Epistolæ lvii. *Ep.* xxvi.—This letter bears date June 30th, 1433.

ſubmit to the ordinances of the auguſt repreſentatives of the Chriſtian church, demanded, that without any delay, he ſhould be put upon his trial, as being impeached of contumacious oppoſition to the exerciſe of legitimate authority. To this demand the archbiſhop of Spoleto and the biſhop of Cervi, in the name of Eugenius, made certain frivolous objections which were immediately overruled. The pontifical deputies were then informed by the preſident, that if they were prepared to announce the determination of their maſter to comply with the requiſitions of the aſsembly in whoſe preſence they ſtood, this welcome intelligence would be received with the utmoſt joy—but that if they were not authorized ſo to do, they might reſt aſsured, that the members of the council would prefer death to the adoption of any meaſures which were likely to endanger the church of Chriſt. The envoys of Eugenius not being authorized to make the required conceſsions, withdrew from the aſsembly, and it was expected that a legal proceſs would have been inſtantly commenced againſt their contumacious conſtituent.

In this criſis Eugenius was ſheltered from the threatened ſtorm by the friendſhip of the emperor Sigiſmund. Towards the latter end of the year 1431, that monarch had come into Italy with the intention of receiving the imperial crown from the hands of the pope.*(a)* Eugenius

(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 147.

however taking umbrage at his intimate connexion with the duke of Milan, whom he regarded as a ſecret enemy to himſelf, and the avowed foe of his country, refuſed to permit him to viſit Rome.*(a)* The emperor being thus fruſtrated in the attainment of the object of his journey acroſs the Alps, quitted Milan, and after viſiting Piacenza, Parma, and Lucca, at length went to Siena, where he fixed his abode for the ſpace of ſeveral months. During his reſidence in this city he carried on a negociation with the pontiff, in the courſe of which he found means to calm the jealous apprehenſions of Eugenius, who at length conſented to admit the imperial petitioner into his capital. Sigiſmund accordingly made his triumphant entry into Rome, where he was received on the twenty-firſt of May, 1433, by the acclamations of the populace; and on the thirty-firſt of the ſame month he was crowned with all due ſolemnity in the church of the Vatican.*(b)* The feſtivity which occurred on this occaſion was encreaſed by the joy diffuſed throughout Italy, on account of the termination of the war between the duke of Milan and the Florentines, who had been induced by the mediation of the Marquis of Eſte, to ſign a treaty of peace at Ferrara about three weeks before Sigiſmund's arrival in Rome.*(c)* During the emperor's reſidence in that

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(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 149.

(b) Ibid. p. 154.

(c) Ibid. p. 153. *Poggii Hist. Flor. p.* 301.

that city, he experienced from Eugenius the reſpectful hoſpitality which was due to his exalted rank and the excellence of his character.*(a)* In return for the kindneſs of the pontiff, he determined to promote his intereſts by moderating the violence of the council. He accordingly ſent by his ambaſsadors a letter to that aſsembly, in which, after recounting the good ſervices which he had rendered to the council of Conſtance, which, he obſerved, bore ſufficient teſtimony of the zeal which he felt for the good of the church, he requeſted that the term appointed for the probation of Eugenius, might be further prolonged for the ſpace of thirty days. With this requeſt, the council immediately complied, and iſsued a decree accordingly.*(b)* Soon after the promulgation of this decree, the emperor arrived in Baſil, and his influence was ſpeedily viſible, in the additional lenity ſhewn to the pontiff, by the prorogation of further proceedings againſt him for the ſpace of ninety days, from the ſixth of November 1433, on which day Sigiſmund aſsiſted in perſon at the ſitting of the council, adorned with all the inſignia of imperial authority.

Nov. 6th. A. D. 1433.

(a) During his reſidence in Rome, Sigiſmund received from the pontiff ſix thouſand gold crowns per month, to enable him to maintain the ſtate becoming his exalted rank. Poggio gave a particular account of the emperor's coronation in a letter to Niccolo Niccoli, which has not yet been printed.

Poggii Historia de Variet. Fort. p. 92. 93.

(b) Concil, tom. XXX. *p.* 114.

Whilſt Sigiſmund was thus exerting his influence to avert from Eugenius, the evil conſequences of his ſtern refuſal to concur in any act derogatory to the prerogatives of the ſovereign pontificate, the proceedings of the council afforded the enemies of the pontiff a pretext to gratify their ambition and revenge, by the invaſion of his territories. It has been before obſerved, that in the courſe of the late war, which the duke of Milan had waged with various ſucceſs againſt the Florentines, that prince had been greatly irritated by the ſupport given to his adverſaries by the pontiff, on whom he determined to ſignalize his vengeance whenever a convenient opportunity ſhould preſent itſelf. When, therefore, the council of Baſil had decreed, that the refuſal of the pontiff to concur in its meaſures ſhould render him liable to the penalty of ſuſpenſion from all pontifical functions whatſoever, the duke aided and abetted Franceſco Sforza, who, under pretence of enforcing the decrees of the council, made an irruption into the ſtates of the church, and made himſelf maſter of Jeſi, Monte d'Olmo, Oſimo, Aſcoli, and Ancona. At the ſame time, the very center of the eccleſiaſtical territories was infeſted by three noted Condottieri, Taliano Furlano, Antonello da Siena, and Jacopo da Lunato, who also profeſsing to act on behalf of the council, invaded the duchy of Spoleto. Nor did the difficulties of Eugenius end here; for he now found by sad experience, that he who in the hour of proſperity injures a benefactor, may in the ſeaſon of adverſity, find that benefactor in the number of his moſt implacable enemies.

mies. His territories were harraſed by the able warrior Niccolò Fortebraccio, who had formerly commanded the pontifical troops with great courage and fidelity, and had reduced under the eccleſiaſtical dominion, the towns of Vetralla and Civita Vecchia; but when he demanded the recompence to which he juſtly imagined himſelf entitled, had indignantly received for anſwer, that the booty which he had taken in the expedition in which he had been engaged, was an ample remuneration for his ſervices. Poggio, who regarded his native country with that proud partiality which has always been a ſtriking feature in the character of the Italians, was greatly chagrined when he ſaw the dominions of the pontiff laid waſte by a war, the flames of which were kindled by a convention of Germans. His attachment to his maſter alſo filled him with the deepeſt concern, when he beheld the difficulties and dangers to which Eugenius was expoſed by the incurſions of his enemies. His ſenſe of the pontiff's misfortunes was the more acute, as he was well aware, that the comforts and emoluments of the officers of the pontifical houſehold were liable to be materially diminiſhed by the interruption of buſineſs, and the defalcation of the papal revenues, which muſt be the inevitable conſequence of the preſent diſturbances. Recollecting the diſagreeable ſituation in which he had been formerly placed by the depoſition of John XXII. he was fearful leſt the council of Baſil ſhould dethrone his preſent lord; by which circumſtance he would be reduced to the diſagreeable alternative of either quitting that line of preferment, in which

which he had fixed all his hopes of future ſubſiſtence, or of adhering to the fortunes of a maſter, whoſe embarraſſments would deprive him of the means of giving his ſervants a remuneration at all adequate either to their merits, or to their neceſsities. Full of theſe gloomy preſages, he determined once more to addreſs himſelf to the Cardinal of St. Angelo, whom he regarded as at leaſt the innocent author of the calamities which affected every conſiderate mind with ſorrow. He accordingly tranſmitted to him the following letter, in which, wiſely forbearing to reproach his friend for his paſt conduct, or to enforce with importunate energy, the neceſsity of adopting new meaſures, he gave him ſuch an account of the ſtate of Italy, and of his own feelings, as was well calculated to make an impreſsion upon his heart.

" Being ſome time ago alarmed by the proſpect of
" impending calamity, and clearly foreſeeing the tem-
" peſts which have now begun to rage with the utmoſt
" violence, I detailed my apprehenſions in a letter which
" I intended, moſt reverend father, to have addreſsed to
" you. This letter, which the nature of its ſubject
" cauſed to be extended to an extraordinary length, I did
" not ſend to you, according to my original deſign—not
" through fear of exciting your diſpleaſure (for I know
" you too well to entertain any apprehenſions on that
" ſubject) but through dread of giving offence to others.
" For though I was conſcious that I was prompted to
" write merely by a wiſh to promote the public good, I

" was

" was apprehenſive leſt my motives ſhould be miſconſtrued,
" and leſt it ſhould be thought that my letter was dictated
" by flattery. You however, and many other reſpectable
" characters, can bear witneſs, that flattery is not by any
" means among the number of my failings, and that nei-
" ther a love of reputation, nor a regard for my own in-
" tereſt, ever induces me to proſtitute my opinions, or
" to approve in words, what I diſapprove in my heart.
" On ſome occaſions indeed I have been materially injur-
" ed by the freedom with which I am accuſtomed to
" ſpeak my ſentiments. But ſenſible as I was, that the
" diſſenſions of the powerful are always dangerous, and
" that the diſſenſions of eccleſiaſtics are attended with
" peculiar peril, inaſmuch as they involve the hazard of
" immortal ſouls; having alſo frequently read and heard,
" that trifling diſagreements have been inflamed into the
" greateſt animoſity and ſtrife, to the utter ruin of ſtates
" and empires, I was afraid leſt this new contention a-
" mongſt the chiefs of the ſacerdotal order, ſhould in-
" volve the Chriſtian world in difficulties which neither
" you nor your aſſociates, whatever might be your
" inclination, would be able to obviate. When we are
" called to the taſk of deliberation, we may forbear to
" act if we pleaſe. But when we have begun to act,
" fortune, the arbitreſs of human affairs, directs the
" event; and directs it rather according to the dictates
" of her caprice, as Salluſt obſerves, than according to
" the principles of reaſon. When you have once put
" yourſelf in motion, you cannot ſtop when you pleaſe.

" In

" In perilous ſeaſons it is the duty of the wiſe to try to " preſerve the ſhip by retaining it in the harbour. When " you have committed yourſelf to the winds, you are " compelled to obey their impulse. In theſe circum- " ſtances the moſt ſkilful pilot may ſuffer ſhipwreck, or " at leaſt, deſpairing of making any effectual reſiſtance " againſt the fury of the gale, he may be carried into " regions far diſtant from thoſe to which it was his wiſh " to ſteer his courſe. When I reflected on theſe topics I " was in a manner irreſiſtibly impelled by my affection " for our common country, to acquaint you with my " ſentiments. After having reſided for ſo many years " in the Roman court, I was grieved to ſee our affairs " reduced to ſuch a ſtate, that we had every thing to " fear, and but little to hope. In theſe circumſtances " I had no conſolation for my ſorrow: for I have not, " like others, been ſo intent upon amaſsing riches, as to " be able to loſe my ſenſe of the public calamity in the " contemplation of my private proſperity. I could wiſh " to be numbered amongſt thoſe

" Whoſe walls now riſe, who reſt in ſoft repoſe."

" Though I am ſenſibly affected by the diſtreſses of " our church, yet I muſt confeſs, that if my own for- " tunes were not involved in the common danger, I " ſhould feel little compaſsion for thoſe who have brought " miſchief upon their own heads, by the obſtinate folly " of their councils. But I am now diſtreſsed by a dou- " ble

" ble grief. For as I have two countries, namely, the
" land of my nativity and the Roman court, the theatre
" of my induſtrious exertions, the ruin of the latter,
" which ſeems to be faſt approaching, cannot but bring
" calamity upon the former. And certainly, matters are
" now brought to ſuch an extremity, that human wiſ-
" dom ſeems incompetent to the healing of the evil. A
" fire is kindled, which nothing but the moſt extenſive
" ruin can extinguiſh. Much better would it have been
" that this unfortunate council had never aſsembled, than
" that it ſhould have occaſioned the devaſtation of Italy.
" We daily behold the fortreſses and towns of this un-
" happy country, plundered by a lawleſs ſoldiery.—
" Slaughter, fire, rapine, the violation of helpleſs fe-
" males, ſwell the catalogue of her woes. Great occa-
" ſion have we to lament, that the holy ſpirit (if indeed
" it now deigns to dwell amongſt us) has changed its
" nature, and inſtead of being the author of peace and
" concord, is become the exciter of hatred and malevo-
" lence. Some people have entertained an opinion, that
" Italy has too long enjoyed the bleſsings of tranquillity,
" and they have ſupplied the ambitious with the means
" of diſturbing the public peace. By this conduct they
" attempt to cure a ſlight indiſpoſition by the introduction
" of a dangerous diſeaſe. For though it may be juſtly
" ſaid, that the eccleſiaſtical body was in ſome reſpects
" out of order, the complaint was not of ſo ſerious a na-
" ture as to require the application of ſuch violent reme-
" dies as are now reſorted to. It can never be the part

" of wiſdom to correct one error by the commiſsion of a
" greater. But let us ſubmit the iſsues of things to
" the direction of providence. One thing I foreſee, that
" ſome nations will derive advantage from our ruin,
" whilſt others will ſhare in our afflictions. But I am
" not anxious about the deſtiny of other countries. I
" mourn over the calamities which I am well aware will
" be brought upon Italy by the oppreſsion which we en-
" dure, and by the ambition of a prince who wiſhes to
" reign according to the dictates of his own arbitrary
" will. You muſt remember that I propheſied, that
" theſe evils would flow from the convocation of the
" council; and I have reſolved to addreſs you once more
" on this ſubject, in order to aſsure you that I was not
" prompted by reſentment thus to communicate my
" opinion, and to prognoſticate impending miſchiefs. I
" beg that you will not be diſpleaſed either by my for-
" mer, or by my preſent letter. If your conſcience ac-
" quits you, regard my remarks as referring to others,
" and not to yourſelf. If you have inadvertently fallen
" into error, you ought to be grateful to him, who in
" the honeſt language of admonition, lays before you his
" own ſentiments, or the opinions of the world at large
" concerning the nature of your conduct. For though
" your virtue has raiſed you to the higheſt degree of dig-
" nity, yet I know that you are but a man, that many
" circumſtances eſcape your obſervation, that various
" matters elude your inquiries, and in ſhort, that it is
" impoſsible

" impoſsible for you to attain to univerſal or infallible " knowledge."*(a)*

It does not appear that this attempt of Poggio to induce the cardinal of St. Angelo to adopt the views of the Roman court, was productive of any benefit either to himſelf or the pontiff. Eugenius indeed finding himſelf involved in the greateſt difficulties, had determined to yield to neceſsity, and acknowledge the legality of the council. He accordingly commiſsioned the archbiſhop of Taranto, and the biſhop of Cervi, to preſent to the aſsembled fathers a letter, in which he declared, that whereas great diſsensions had ariſen in conſequence of his having diſsolved the council then ſitting at Baſil, he was willing to teſtify his regard for the church by confirming the proceedings of that aſsembly, which he acknowledged to have been legally held and continued; unreſervedly revoking the bulls by which its proceedings had been condemned, and profeſsing that he would henceforth ceaſe from doing any thing to the prejudice of the council, or of any of its adherents.*(b)* This letter, which was publicly read in the cathedral of Baſil on the 5th of February 1434, gave conſiderable ſatisfaction to the friends of reformation and peace, who hoped that the happi-

(a) Poggii Epist. lvii. *p.* 221, 222, 223. This letter, which by a typographical error is dated 1433, was written, Jan. 27th, 1434.

(b) Concilior. tom. xxx. *p.* 129.

eſt conſequences would reſult from this union of the head and the principal members of the eccleſiaſtical body.—Together with his conciliatory epiſtle, Eugenius ſent a commiſsion, empowering ſeveral eminent dignitaries of the church, to act as his repreſentatives, and in his name to preſide at the debates of the council. Such however was the jealouſy with which the proceedings of the pontiff were obſerved, that before theſe deputies were permitted, in their official capacity to take any part in the deliberations of the council, they were compelled to take an oath, whereby they bound themſelves to maintain all the ordinances of that aſsembly, and particularly that decree which aſserted, that the authority of a general council was paramount to that of the pope.*(a)*

Though by theſe acts of conceſsion, Eugenius appeared to have made his peace with the council, his dominions continued to feel the ſcourge of war. The freebooters by which they were infeſted, in fact deſpiſed the debates of churchmen; and though they pretended that they invaded the eccleſiaſtical ſtates in order to compel Eugenius to ſubmit to the power of the council, they did not manifeſt any diſpoſition to withdraw their forces when the pretended object of their expedition was accompliſhed. In theſe circumſtances Eugenius endeavoured to diminiſh the number of his foes by ſoliciting Sforza to

(a) *Concilior, p.* 146.

to agree to terms of pacification. In this inſtance his efforts were crowned with the deſired ſucceſs. Sforza, on condition of his being appointed to the government of the Marca d'Ancona, with the title of apoſtolic vicar and gonfaloniere of the Roman church, not only conſented to abſtain from further hoſtilities againſt his holineſs, but promiſed to defend the pontiff from the attacks of his other enemies. In purſuance of this promiſe, he turned his arms againſt Fortebraccio, whom he fought and defeated near Tivoli. The duke of Milan was greatly diſpleaſed by the change which had ſo ſuddenly taken place in the politics of Sforza; and ſtill perſiſting in his determination to harraſs the pontiff, he excited Niccolò Piccinino to attempt the conqueſt of his native city Perugia. Piccinino marching into Romagna with this intention, kept Sforza in check, and thus favoured the operations of Fortebraccio. The latter chieftain having received a reinforcement of troops from Viterbo, puſhed his light cavalry to the very gates of Rome. On the approach of his forces, the faction of the Colonnas, who, though not openly, yet deeply reſented the cruelty with which their chiefs had been treated at the commencement of Eugenius's pontificate, and had long been waiting for an opportuniny of taking vengeance on their adverſaries, flew to arms, exhorting the populace to aſsert their liberty. The inſurrection ſoon became general, and the rebellious Romans, not contented with impriſoning Franceſco Condolmieri, the nephew of Eugenius, ſurrounded with guards the reſidence of the pontiff himſelf. Eugenius,

May 29th. A. D 1433.

genius, however, diſguiſing himſelf in the habit of a monk, had the good fortune to elude their vigilance; June 5th. and, attended by two only of his domeſtics, threw himſelf into a ſmall bark, with an intention of taking refuge in Oſtia. But he had not proceeded far down the Tyber, before he was recognized by the populace, who, crowding to the banks of the river, almoſt overwhelmed him with a ſhower of ſtones and arrows. So fierce was their attack, that it was not without conſiderable difficulty that the fugitive pontiff effected his eſcape, and retired, firſt to Leghorn, and afterwards to Florence. *(a)*

On this occaſion the officers of the pontifical houſehold were diſperſed, each providing for his own ſafety according to the dictates of his prudence, or his fear. The greater number of them, embarking in ſome ſmall coaſting veſſels, ſet ſail for Piſa; but were met in the courſe of their voyage by ſome Corſican pirates, who plundered them of all their property. Others, attempting to proceed to Florence by land, were expoſed to various vexations. Poggio had the misfortune to fall into the hands of the ſoldiers of Piccinino, who detained him in captivity, in the expectation of extorting from him a conſiderable ſum of money, by way of ranſom. *(b)*

When

(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 155, 156, 157, 158.—*Platina, p.* 405.—*Ambrogii Traversarii Epistolæ, lib.* i. *ep.* vi. *apud notas.*

(b) Poggii Histor. de Variet. Fortunæ, p. 92.

When the intelligence of this event reached the Tuſcan territory, it excited the deep concern of all his acquaintance, and particularly of Ambrogio Traverſari, who, without delay, earneſtly ſolicited Franceſco, count of Poppio, to exert all his influence to procure his liberation.

" Since I laſt wrote to you," ſays he in his letter to the count, " I have received information that my moſt " intimate friend, the dear aſsociate of my ſtudies, Pog- " gio, the papal ſecretary, is detained in captivity by the " magnificent lord and excellent captain Niccolò Picci- " nino. Believe me this intelligence is very painful to " my feelings—but the concern which I experience, is " much alleviated by the opinion which I have long en- " tertained of your humanity, and which induces me to " hope that I ſhall not make a requeſt to you in vain.— " I beg and beſeech you therefore, my lord, to uſe all " diligence to effect the liberation of one whom you " know to be moſt dear to me. I preſume that the il- " luſtrious chieftain, at whoſe diſpoſal he now is, can " deny you nothing, eſpecially when you make a rea- " ſonable requeſt on behalf of a friend. I ſhould be " more diffuſe in my petition did I think it were needful, " and were I not aſsured, that fewer words than thoſe " which I have already written will be ſufficient to " induce Piccinino to reſtore ſo learned and liberally " minded a man as Poggio, to liberty."*(a)*

The

(a) Ambrogii Traverſarii Epiſt. lib. v. *ep.* x.

The endeavours of Ambrogio to procure the gratuitous releaſe of Poggio were ineffectual. The rugged ſoldiers who detained the learned Secretary in captivity, had no ſympathy with the feelings of friendſhip. They reſpected not the accompliſhments of the ſcholar, and in all probability their obſervation of the eſteem in which their priſoner was held by his friends, ſerved only to enhance the price which they demanded for his liberation. Finding that he had no other means of deliverance, Poggio purchaſed his freedom at the expenſe of a ſum of money, which the narrowneſs of his circumſtances rendered it very inconvenient for him to pay; and immediately on his enlargement, he continued his route to Florence.*(a)*

(a) Poggii Hist. de Variet. Fort. p. 92.—Opera, p. 392.

CHAP. VI.

STATE of parties in Florence—Cosmo de' Medicis at the head of the faction of the people—His banishment—Poggio's letter to him on that occasion—Francesco Filelfo an enemy of the Medicis—Poggio's quarrel with Filelfo.

CHAP. VI.

AT almoſt any other period than that of the flight of Eugenius from Rome, the dangers and inconveniencies to which Poggio was expoſed in following the fortunes of his maſter, would have been in a great meaſure counterbalanced by the opportunity which the tranſlation of the pontifical court to Florence afforded him of reviſiting the ſcene of his youthful ſtudies. He was accuſtomed to regard the Tuſcan capital as a ſure refuge in the ſeaſon of calamity, as a hoſpitable retreat, where, whenever he was oppreſsed by adverſe fortune, he might ſooth his cares to reſt in the boſom of friendſhip. But how frequently do events demonſtrate the fallaciouſneſs of human expectations! When at the termination of his journey, the ſtately towers of Florence roſe to the view of Poggio, he experienced a ſentiment of deep dejection, in reflecting, that amongſt the friends whoſe eagerneſs to congratulate him on his ſafe

arrival, he anticipated in pleaſing imagination, he ſhould not now behold his illuſtrious protector Coſmo de' Medicis, whom the intrigues of faction had lately baniſhed from his native land. This celebrated man had inherited from his anceſtors a conſiderable property, which he had improved by his own induſtry and ſkill in mercantile affairs. In popular governments, riches, if they are diffuſed with a liberal hand, generally become the means of acquiring power; and if the poſſeſſor of wealth unite with generoſity, the diſcernment of prudence and the graces of urbanity, he almoſt infallibly ſecures to himſelf the permanent favour of the people. To Coſmo therefore, in whoſe character theſe virtues met in happy conjunction, the Florentine populace looked up with ſentiments of enthuſiaſtic admiration. Examining the hiſtory of his native city with the eye of a ſtateſman, and meditating upon the civic revolutions which he himſelf had witneſſed, that ſagacious politician had obſerved, that in the contentions for power which had frequently taken place between the ariſtocracy and the lower orders of the ſtate, the plebeian faction had almoſt always failed, through want of a leader whoſe authority might reſtrain their irregularities, and whoſe judgment might give to their efforts the conſiſtency and energy of ſyſtem. In order to ſupply this deficiency, he placed himſelf at the head of the popular party, preſuming, no doubt, that whilſt he exerciſed his ſplendid talents for the benefit of his adherents, he could at the ſame time make uſe of the favour of the people to promote his own

own emolument and glory.*(a)* Acting with theſe views, he ſoon gained a degree of aſcendancy in the republic, which enabled him to embarraſs the meaſures of the ariſtocracy. Coſmo now found by experience, that he who engages in civil diſſenſions, embarks on a ſea of troubles. The chiefs of the oppoſite party regarded him with that hatred, which the privileged orders uſually entertain againſt thoſe who attempt to reſtrain their ambition and diminiſh their power. At the head of the nobility was Rinaldo degli Albizzi, who watched the proceedings of Coſmo with all the vigilance of factious jealouſy, and reſolved to ſeize the earlieſt opportunity to effect his deſtruction. This opportunity ſeemed to preſent itſelf in the appointment of Bernardo Guadagni, over whom Rinaldo had obtained an abſolute aſcendancy by the payment of his debts, to the office of Gonfaloniere, or chief magiſtrate of the republic. No ſooner was Guadagni inveſted with his new honours, than he made the requiſite preparations to ſubdue the faction of the people. At this time Coſmo was at his country ſeat at Mugello, a pleaſant valley, ſituated at a ſmall diſtance from Florence,*(b)* whither he had withdrawn, in order to avoid the confuſion of civil diſcord; but the proceedings of Guadagni could

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(a) Elogi degli Uomini Illustri Toscani, tom. i. p. 367.

(b) Eadem iter facienti ad ortum occurrit amæna vallis, villis et pagis referta nomine Mugellum quam interfluit flumen Sæva.

Schotti Itinerarium Italiæ, p. 189.

could not be concealed from his partizans, who immediately ſent meſſengers to inform him that his adverſaries were meditating ſome enterpriſe of a hoſtile nature. On the receipt of this intelligence, Coſmo repaired to Florence, and waiting on ſome of the chiefs of the ariſtocracy whom he regarded as his perſonal friends, he repreſented to them the reaſons which he had to be alarmed for his ſafety. Being either ignorant of the deſigns of Rinaldo, or eager to ſecure their victim by the baſe artifices of treachery, theſe men aſſured him that he had nothing to fear. Coſmo put ſo much confidence in their proteſtations, that he readily obeyed a ſummons which he ſoon afterwards received, requiring him to attend at a council which was to be held on the ſeventh of September, 1433, to deliberate upon the beſt method of ſecuring the tranquillity of the ſtate. He was no ſooner arrived at the palace, than the ſquare in front of that edifice was lined with armed men, commanded by Rinaldo and the other chiefs of the ariſtocracy. Under the control of this guard, the people were ſummoned to elect two hundred deputies, to whom was to be delegated the important buſineſs of deciding upon the reforms which were neceſsary in the adminiſtration of public affairs. Theſe deputies were no ſooner choſen, than their attention was directed to Coſmo by his enemies, ſome of whom loudly demanded his death, as neceſsary to the preſervation of the public tranquillity, whilſt others, more moderate in their views, and more merciful in their diſpoſitions, inſiſted upon it,

it, that this deſirable end would be effectually accompliſhed, by baniſhing him to a diſtance from the territories of the republic. During this awful deliberation, Coſmo was detained a priſoner in the palace, from the windows of which, whilſt he anxiouſly endeavoured, by watching the geſtures of his judges, to prognoſticate his fate, he heard the din of arms, and obſerved the movements of the troops. The fear of ſome of the deputies, and the ſecret attachment of others to the perſon of Coſmo, preventing the aſsembly from coming to any immediate determination of his deſtiny, he was for the preſent committed to the cuſtody of Federigo Malavolti. Finding himſelf thus in the power of his enemies, and underſtanding that they had not been able to prevail on the deputies to decree his death, he was apprehenſive that they would attempt to take him off by poiſon. Powerfully impreſsed by this idea, for the ſpace of four days he declined taking any food, except a ſmall portion of bread. The pride of Federigo was offended by this ſuſpicion of his priſoner, whom he is ſaid to have addreſsed in the following terms:—
"Through fear of dying by poiſon, Coſmo, you are de-
"ſtroying yourſelf by famine. And have you ſo little
"reliance on my honour as to think that I would be ac-
"ceſsary to ſuch villainy? So numerous are your friends,
"that I do not think your life is in any danger;
"but ſhould your deſtruction be determined upon, reſt
"aſsured, that your adverſaries would find other means
"than my aſsiſtance to effect their purpoſe. I would
"not

" not imbrue my hands in any one's blood, much leſs " in yours who have never offended me. Be of good " courage—take your food, and live for your friends and " your country; and that you may take your repaſt in " full confidence, I will partake of whatſoever you eat." Overcome by this manly addreſs, Coſmo, with tears in his eyes, embraced his keeper, and vowed, that if fortune ſhould ever put it in his power, he would teſtify his grateful ſenſe of his kindneſs.

When the adherents of Coſmo were informed of his impriſonment, they took up arms with a determination to effect his deliverance: but by the direction of his particular friends, who were juſtly apprehenſive that Rinaldo would be provoked by any hoſtile attempt on their part, to ſignalize his vengeance by the murder of his priſoner, they retired without accompliſhing any thing in his favour. Upon this the deputies, renewing their deliberations, after violent debates, paſsed a decree, whereby they baniſhed Coſmo from the Florentine territories for the ſpace of ten years, and appointed Padua as the place of his exile. When the news of this event reached Venice, the ſeigniory of that republic took ſuch a lively intereſt in the fate of Coſmo, that they ſent to Florence three ambaſsadors, who were inſtructed to requeſt, that during the term of his baniſhment he might be permitted to reſide in their city. The petition of the Venetians was granted; but the triumphant nobles ſtill detained Coſmo in cuſtody as an hoſtage, to ſecure the acquieſcence

acquieſcence of his partizans in the new measures which they intended to adopt for the regulation of the ſtate. They were alſo prompted to protract his impriſonment by the malicious hope, that the hazardous nature of his ſituation would injure his commercial credit. When Coſmo found himſelf thus unexpectedly detained, with the connivance of his keeper he ſent a meſsage to his friends, directing them to purchaſe the favour of Guadagni by the timely application of a ſum of money. Influenced by this powerful motive, the mercenary chief magistrate, on the night of the third of October, liberated his priſoner from cuſtody, and conducting him through one of the city gates, ſuffered him without further moleſtation to proceed on his route to Padua. On his arrival at Venice, the illuſtrious exile was met by the principal citizens of that ſtate, who received him with every mark of honour and reſpect; and he had not long reſided at Padua, before the adminiſtrators of the Tuſcan government were perſuaded, by the reiterated inſtances of the ſeigniory, to enlarge the ſphere of his liberty to the full extent of the territories of the Venetian republic.*(a)*

In the days of his proſperity, Coſmo had been diſtinguiſhed as the munificent patron of learned men. To them

(a) Machiavelli Istorie Fiorentine, p. 209. 210. 211.—Ricordi di Cosmo de' Medicis in the appendix to the 1st vol. of Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medicis, No. ii.

them his doors were conſtantly open; and his purſe was always ready to aſsiſt their efforts to promote the diffuſion of literature. Poggio had long enjoyed the happineſs of being honoured by his particular favour. The pleaſing intercourſe of beneficence and gratitude which had at an early period taken place between the learned ſecretary and the princely merchant of Florence, had been matured into the intimacy of the moſt cordial friendſhip. Poggio was not one of thoſe ſycophants who reſerve their homage for the proſperous; and who, with the baſe foreſight which is too frequently dignified with the name of prudence, ſtudiouſly diſengage themſelves from the fortunes of a falling family. When he received information that his benefactor had been obliged to yield to the fury of his enemies, he experienced all the emotions of affectionate ſympathy; and haſtened to teſtify his undiminiſhed regard for his perſecuted friend in the following conſolatory epiſtle.

" Though the ſerious misfortune in which you are in-
" volved is too great to be alleviated by conſolation,
" eſpecially by ſuch conſolation as can be adminiſtered
" by one of my moderate abilities—yet, following the
" dictates of my affection for you, I had rather run the
" hazard of expoſing the feebleneſs of my genius, than
" fail in the duty of friendſhip. It is ſaid that trifling
" circumſtances ſometimes produce conſiderable effects in
" affairs of the greateſt moment; and I may be permitted
" to indulge the hope, that this epiſtle may tend in ſome
" ſmall

" ſmall degree, to lighten the weight of your affliction.
" You have experienced the capriciouſneſs of fortune (for
" this goddeſs we may blame with impunity) and you
" are fallen from a ſtation of conſiderable eminence.
" Now, though I have always obſerved that you are en-
" dowed with a ſtrength of mind which enables you to
" regard with indifference, afflictions which would over-
" whelm the generality of men, yet when I conſider the
" magnitude of your misfortunes, I cannot but be appre-
" henſive of the effect which they may have upon your
" feelings. If, in your preſent circumſtances, you riſe
" in the confidence of courage, ſuperior to the aſſaults of
" fortune, if you have placed your dependence upon the
" ſecurity of a pure conſcience, rather than external
" good, and if you value the bleſsings of the preſent
" life at no higher a rate than is conſiſtent with the dic-
" tates of true wiſdom—I congratulate you on the ac-
" quiſition of that happy conſtitution of mind which
" renders conſolation unneceſsary. If, on the other hand,
" in conſequence of the natural frailty incident to huma-
" nity, this ſudden change in your circumſtances has
" diſturbed the tranquillity of your temper, (and before
" this trial the conſtancy of the moſt illuſtrious men has
" been found to give way) you muſt have recourſe to
" the principles of reaſon, which will ſuggeſt to you, that
" you have loſt nothing which can be truly called your
" own. Dignities, authority, and honours, riches, power,
" and health, are liable to be impaired by the ſhocks of
" fortune, and the machinations of our enemies. But

" prudence, magnanimity, probity, fortitude, and fide-
" lity, are qualities which we obtain by our own exer-
" tions, and which we may retain in defiance of exter-
" nal injury and diſtreſs. Theſe virtues you have culti-
" vated as your firmeſt defence in the hour of danger;
" and whilſt you are poſſeſſed of this rich endowment,
" you ſhould rejoice in the enjoyment of ſuch exquiſite
" bleſsings, rather than grieve on account of the wrongs
" which you ſuffer from your foes. I am well aſsured,
" that you are not of the number of thoſe who fix their
" hopes of happineſs on the kindneſs of fortune. For,
" notwithſtanding the ample poſſeſsions, and the exalted
" honours which you have formerly attained, (poſſeſ-
" ſions and honours ſuperior to any which have fallen to
" the lot of any other citizen of our ſtate) you have
" always made it your ſtudy to acquire thoſe good quali-
" ties of the heart, which render a man independent of
" externals. In public affairs, uniting prudence in deli-
" beration, with ability in execution, you always acted
" with ſuch good faith and integrity, that you reſerved
" for yourſelf nothing, ſave honour and glory. Would
" all men follow ſo worthy an example, our republic
" would enjoy much greater tranquillity than falls to her
" lot at preſent. You have given the moſt ample proof
" of your dutifulneſs to your native country, of libera-
" lity to your friends, and benevolence to all men. You
" have been the ſupport of the needy, the refuge of the
" oppreſsed, the patron and friend of the learned. You
" have uſed the gifts of fortune with ſuch moderation,

" modeſty,

" modeſty, and kindneſs, that they appeared to be no-
" thing more than the due reward paid to your virtue and
" merits. I forbear to dwell upon the literary purſuits
" in which you have been engaged from the days of your
" youth, and in which you have made ſuch progreſs,
" that you are juſtly deemed an ornament and an honour
" to learning. When the important affairs of a public
" nature, by which your time has of late years been oc-
" cupied, prevented you from dedicating to ſtudy as
" much time as you wiſhed to have appropriated to that
" purſuit, you ſought inſtruction and gratification in the
" converſation of learned men whom you invited to par-
" take of the hoſpitality of your houſe. From theſe
" eminent ſcholars you imbibed the precepts of wiſdom,
" which you reſolved to adopt as the rule of your con-
" duct in all circumſtances and ſituations.

" The conſciouſneſs of innocence, and the remem-
" brance of virtuous deeds, is the greateſt ſource of
" conſolation in adverſity. He who can appeal to
" his own heart in proof of the uprightneſs of his
" intentions—he who can truly ſay that he has acted
" honourably both in his public and private capacity,
" that he has always ſtudied the promotion of the ge-
" neral good, that he has aſſiſted his friends with whole-
" ſome advice, and the poor with money; that he has
" hurt no one, not even thoſe who had injured him—
" this man muſt be well prepared to endure the ſhock
" of adverſity. A courſe of conduct regulated by theſe
" principles,

" principles, confers true and ſolid dignity. On this " foundation you have eſtabliſhed your character as a " worthy man and an excellent citizen. Acting on " theſe principles, you have riſen to immortal glory. " Wherever you go, that beſt of bleſsings, the teſti- " mony of a good conſcience will attend you; and the " memory of your virtues will ſurvive when you are laid " in the grave.

" Now, ſince the retroſpect of your paſt conduct affords " you ſuch a pure delight, you ought to feel yourſelf " elated by conſcious dignity: for on what can we " juſtly pride ourſelves, except on the reputation which " we have acquired by our virtues? Since, then, you " have ſo ſtrong a fortreſs, in which you can take refuge " in time of trouble, turn your attention to thoſe things " which accompany you in your exile, namely, your " liberality, your prudence, your gravity, your upright " intentions, your diſcernment, your attachment to " your native country, for which you have always teſti- " fied the utmoſt affection; and eſpecially in the late " civil broils to which you have fallen a victim. I need " not remind you of your literary purſuits, which ſo " ſignally contribute to the alleviation of ſorrow, and " to the ſtrengthening of the mind by the examples and " precepts of the moſt worthy men. For you know " that philoſophers of old have maintained, that the " mind of the wiſe man is beyond the reach of the " impulſes of fortune, and that it mocks the efforts of

" external

" external violence—that virtue is the chief good—and " that all other poſſeſſions are bleſſings, or the contrary, " according to the diſpoſitions of the poſſeſſor. But I " do not require that you ſhould be of the number of " thoſe faultleſs friends of wiſdom, who have, perhaps, " never exiſted, excepting in idea. I only hope that " you will be found worthy to claſs with thoſe, who, " according to common acceptation, and the general " courſe of human conduct are reputed wiſe.

" And, in the firſt place, conſider how far fortune " has exerciſed her tyranny in your caſe. For, if you " could diveſt yourſelf of the firſt impreſſions of grief, " and coolly conſider what ſhe has taken away, and " what ſhe has left, you will find that you have ſuſtained " little injury—nay, that you have derived benefit from " her caprice. She has baniſhed you from your native " country, which you have often voluntarily quitted— " but ſhe has reſtored to you your liberty, which you " did not enjoy when you ſeemed to be the freeſt man in " the ſtate. She has deprived you of a certain ſpecious " appearance of dignity, and of the reſpect of the vul- " gar, who are always miſtaken in their eſtimate of true " felicity—but ſhe has left you your children, your wife, " your riches, your good health, and your excellent bro- " ther: and, ſurely, the pleaſures which theſe bleſſings " beſtow upon you, ought far to outweigh the mortifi- " cation which you experience in conſequence of your " loſſes. She has taken away from you a kind of civic

" pomp,

" pomp, and a popularity full of trouble, labour, envy,
" anxiety, and continual cares. Theſe honours, many
" men eminent for their prudence have deſpiſed. Their
" loſs may be a matter of ſorrow to thoſe who have en-
" deavoured to convert them into a ſource of gain; but
" you, whom they involved in ſo much labour and diffi-
" culty, ought not be concerned at being deprived of
" them, eſpecially as they never were the objects of your
" deſire or ambition. For you did not enter upon public
" offices, with a view of promoting your own intereſt,
" or of increaſing your importance, but with an ardent
" deſire of doing good to the public. Fortune has re-
" ſtored you to real liberty. You were formerly, in fact,
" a mere ſlave. You could not follow your own incli-
" nations, either in ſleeping or waking, in eating or in
" taking exerciſe. Frequently were you prevented by
" the imperious claims of public buſineſs, from aſſiſting
" your friends, and indulging in the delights of retire-
" ment. Your time was at the diſpoſal of others, and
" you were obliged to attend to every perſon's ſentiments.
" Many favours you were compelled to grant, in direct
" oppoſition to your own wiſhes, nay, even in oppoſition
" to the dictates of equity; and you were frequently re-
" duced to the diſagreeable neceſsity of practiſing the
" art of diſſimulation. This change of fortune has,
" however, ſet you at liberty; for it has certainly reſtor-
" ed to you the freedom of your will. It has alſo en-
" abled you to put to the teſt, the conſtancy of thoſe
" who profeſsed themſelves your friends; and it has,
" moreover,

" moreover called into exerciſe the ſteady fortitude of " your ſoul. All your acquaintance had ſeen with how " great politeneſs, gentleneſs, clemency, equity, and " moderation, you conducted yourſelf in the ſeaſon of " proſperity—a ſeaſon in which men who have attained " to ſome eminence in wiſdom, have frequently been " betrayed into evil. This new ſpecies of trial gives you " an opportunity of ſhewing the vigour with which you " can ſtruggle againſt the ſtorms of adverſity. Many " can bear proſperity who ſhrink before the impulſe of " misfortune. Others who have ſhone conſpicuouſly in " the ſeaſon of ſorrow, have given way to the emotions " of vanity and pride in the hour of their exaltation. " But you we have beheld neither inflated by arrogance in " proſperity, nor ſunk into dejection by adverſity. In " either fortune, you have exhibited an example of the " moſt unruffled equanimity.

" Let the following conſideration ſupport you in the " midſt of your trials—that you are not the firſt, and " that you will not be the laſt man whoſe ſervices to his " country have been repaid by unmerited exile. Hiſtory " abounds in inſtances of excellent men, who have been " cruelly perſecuted by their ungrateful fellow citizens. " They who cannot bear the ſplendor of another's vir- " tues are unwilling to look upon it. Envy is com- " monly the companion of glory—envy which always " torments thoſe who cannot attain to the eminence of " honour; and inſtigates them to perſecute with ſlander

" and malevolence the illuſtrious character whoſe virtues
" they are unable to imitate. Hence it happens, that
" very few men of ſuperlative talents eſcape the fury of
" civil tempeſts. The fear of giving offence deters me
" from dwelling upon the inſtances of this nature, which
" have occurred in modern times, and in our own repub-
" lic. But whoſoever examines the records of antiquity,
" will find that the odium excited by civil diſcord has
" occaſioned the baniſhment of a conſiderable number of
" excellent citizens—and that, not in our country alone,
" but in other ſtates of the greateſt eminence. To ſay
" nothing of the Greeks and Barbarians, the Roman re-
" public even at the time when it is repreſented as hav-
" ing attained to the higheſt pitch of glory, was afflicted
" with this infirmity. A few examples will be ſufficient
" to demonſtrate the truth of my aſsertion. Which of
" his contemporaries was equal in valour, probity, and
" illuſtrious deeds to Furius Camillus? Yet, in conſe-
" quence of the malevolence of the tribunes and the
" populace, he was compelled to retire into exile; at a
" time too when his country ſtood very much in need of
" his aſſiſtance. You well remember the important ſer-
" vice rendered to the Roman commonwealth by Scipio
" Africanus; you recollect the moderation, continence,
" and gravity, which ſhone ſo conſpicuouſly in the life of
" the illuſtrious conqueror of Hannibal—yet he too was
" driven from his native country by the rage of the tri-
" bunes. The uprightneſs and ſanctity of P. Rutilius
" were the very cauſes of his baniſhment. When this
" man

" man had an opportunity of returning to his country
" in conſequence of Sylla's victory, he had the honeſt
" pride to refuſe to fix his reſidence in a ſtate in which
" arms were ſuperior to the laws. The villainy of Clo-
" dius expelled M. T. Cicero, the ſaviour of his country,
" who is ſaid to have been accuſtomed to boaſt, that he
" was carried back to Rome on the ſhoulders of all Italy.
" Hiſtory has recorded the names of ſeveral other re-
" nowned men who have ſhared the ſame fate: but I
" have only mentioned theſe four, the conſideration of
" whoſe deſtiny may prevent you from being ſurpriſed
" at your own misfortunes. I ſhall not pretend to
" maintain that you are equal to theſe exalted characters
" in fame and ſplendor—but this I will ſay, that like
" them, you have experienced an ungrateful return for
" your good ſervices to your fellow citizens; and that
" in one reſpect, your glory is not at all inferior to theirs.
" For in my opinion, you deſerve to be held in everlaſt-
" ing remembrance for the deference which you paid to
" the decree of the magiſtrates, though you knew the
" doom which awaited you. For when, as it is com-
" monly reported, you could have repelled the meditated
" injury by the aſsiſtance of your partizans, and the in-
" terference of the populace, you thought it better to ſub-
" mit to wrong, than to avert it by violence.*(a)* And

(a) The following extract from Coſmo's Ricordi, proves that he could not with a ſafe conſcience accept this part of Poggio's panegyric, " Niccolo da

" as civil tumults never end in good, conſulting for the " quiet of your country, and the tranquillity of your " fellow citizens, you prudently ſuffered this ſudden " ſtorm to waſte its fury on yourſelf and your connex- " ions, rather than endanger the republic by exciting " the flame of war. By this conduct you have attained " to the height—I ſay not of modern, but of ancient " glory. For what is more laudable than that diſpoſi- " tion which prompts a man to expoſe himſelf to the " fury of the billows for the ſake of the general ſafety. " Under the influence of that virtue which prefers pub- " lic to private good, other ſtates have flouriſhed; and " the Roman republic attained to univerſal dominion.

" Protected then as you are by the moſt illuſtrious " virtues, you ought not to complain.—You ought to be " thankful to fortune which has called theſe virtues into " exerciſe, and has ſummoned you to a conteſt, in which " you will gain the higheſt commendation on earth, and " eternal glory in heaven. Theſe two things are the ob- " jects of the moſt ardent wiſhes of good men; for they " are

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" Tolentino ſentito il caſo à di 8. venne la mattina con tutta la ſua compagnia alla " Laſtra, e con animo di fare novità nella Terra, perchè io fuſsi laſciato; e così " ſubito che ſi ſentì il caſo nell' Alpi di Romagna e di più altri luoghi, venne " à Lorenzo gran quantità di fanti. Fu confortato il Capitano, e così Lorenzo " à non fare novità, che poteva eſser cagione di farmi fare novità nella perſona, " e così feciono; e benchè chi configliò queſto fuſsino parenti, e amici, e à " buon fine, non fu buono configlio; perchè ſe ſi fuſsino fatti inanzi, ero libero, " e chi era ſtato cagione di queſto reſtava diſfatto."—*Ricordi ut ſupra.*

" are the meed of virtue. During the remainder of " your life then, enjoy the bleſsings which you ſtill poſ- " ſeſs with a tranquil and peaceful mind; and in what- " ever land your lot may be caſt, think that your coun- " try, the theatre of your dignity—the ſpot where you " are called to exert your talents for the promotion of " the public good."*(a)*

Such were the councils by which Poggio endeavoured to fortify the mind of his baniſhed patron againſt the ſhafts of adverſe fortune. His letter breathes the ſpirit of enlightened friendſhip, and his choice of topics of conſolation evinces an accurate knowledge of the human heart. It may be reaſonably conjectured, that Coſmo was highly gratified by this proof of his ſincere attachment; and that he profited by his good advice. But the adminiſtration of wholeſome counſel was not the only mode in which Poggio, on this occaſion, teſtified his zeal in the cauſe of his perſecuted benefactor. In the intercourſes of friendſhip, his temperament diſpoſed him ſtrongly to ſympathize with the reſentment of thoſe whom he regarded with ſentiments of eſteem and affection. Conſequently the injuries ſuſtained by Coſmo, inſpired him with the utmoſt degree of animoſity againſt the family of the Albizzi, and all their partizans and abettors. This animoſity againſt the enemies of his exiled

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 312—317.

exiled friend, which he took no pains to diſguiſe, ſoon involved him in a moſt violent quarrel with the celebrated Franceſco Filelfo, who had been induced by the turbulence of his temper, to intermeddle in the political diſputes which had for a long ſpace of time diſturbed the tranquillity of Florence, and to diſcharge the venom of his ſpleen againſt the houſe of Medicis and all its adherents.

This extraordinary man was born at Tolentino, on the twenty-fifth of July, 1398. Having given early indications of a love of literature, he was ſent to proſecute his ſtudies in the univerſity of Padua. In this ſeminary he made ſuch an uncommon proficiency, that when he had attained the age of eighteen, he read lectures on eloquence to numerous audiences. The reputation which he had acquired by this early diſplay of brilliant talents, procured him an invitation to inſtruct the noble youth of Venice in polite literature. This invitation he readily accepted, and in the diſcharge of his public duties he acquitted himſelf ſo much to the ſatisfaction of his employers, that he was preſented with the freedom of the ſtate. In the courſe of a little time after his ſettlement in Venice, the ſeigniory teſtified their ſenſe of his merits by appointing him to the office of ſecretary to the embaſsy which they uſually maintained at Conſtantinople. This office he retained for the ſpace of two years, at the end of which period he entered into the ſervice of the Greek emperor John Palæologus, who employed him in affairs of

of the greateſt conſequence. In the character of confidential agent or envoy of that monarch, he viſited the courts of Amurath II. the Turkiſh Sultan, and of Sigiſmund, emperor of Germany. During his reſidence at Conſtantinople he married Theodora, the daughter of a noble Greek, the celebrated John Cryſoloras. In the year 1427 he quitted Conſtantinople and returned to Venice. As he had aſſiduouſly improved the opportunities which he had lately enjoyed of cultivating the knowledge of Grecian literature, he expected, on his return to his adopted country, to be hailed as the champion of ſcience and the reſtorer of learning.*(a)* But in this expectation

(a) In a letter to Ambrogio Traverſari, he gives the following catalogue of the books which he had collected during his reſidence in Conſtantinople.—" Qui " mihi noſtri in Italiam libri geſti ſunt, horum nomina ad te ſcribo: alios " autem nonnullos per primas ex Byzantio Venetorum naves opperior. Hi " autem ſunt Plotinus, Aelianus, Ariſtides, Dionyſius Halicarnaſeus, Strabo " Geographus, Hermogenes, Ariſtotelis Rhetorice, Dionyſius Halicarnaſeus de " numeris et characteribus, Thucydides, Plutarchi Moralia, Proclus in Platonem, " Philo Judæus, Herodotus, Dio Chryſoſtomus, Appollonius Pergæus, Ethica Ari- " ſtotelis, Ejus magna Moralia et Eudemia, et Oeconomica, et Politica, quædam " Theophraſti Opuſcula, Homeri Ilias, Odyſsea, Philoſtrati de vitâ Appollonii, " Orationes Libanii, et aliqui ſermones Luciani, Pindarus, Aratus, Euripidis " tragediæ ſeptem,. Theocritus, Heſiodus, Suidas; Phalaridis, Hippocratis, " Platonis et multorum ex veteribus philoſophis Epiſtolæ; Demoſthenes, " Aeſchinis Orationes et Epiſtolæ, pleraque Xenophontis Opera, una Lyſiæ " Oratio, Orphei Argonautica et Hymni, Callimachus. Ariſtoteles de hiſtoriis " animalium, Phyſica, et Metaphyſica, et de Animâ, de partibus Animalium, " et alia quædam, Polybius, nonnulli ſermones Chryſoſtomi, Dionyſiaca, et " alii Poetæ plurimi. Habes qui mihi ſint, et his utere æque ac tuis."

Ambrosii Traversarii Opera, tom. ii. *p.* 1010.

In the collection of this noble ſtore of Grecian literature, Filelfo muſt have

pectation he was diſappointed. His name no longer poſſeſsed the charm of novelty. The intereſt which was occaſioned on his firſt viſit to Venice, by the circumſtance of his filling the profeſsor's chair at ſo early an age, was naturally weakened by the lapſe of nearly eight years; and in all probability the jealous ariſtocracy of the Venetian capital, reſented his quitting the ſervice of their ſtate for the honours and emoluments of the Byzantine court. Theſe cauſes concurred to render his reception at Venice by no means flattering to his feelings. The mortification which he experienced on this occaſion was heightened by the deplorable ſtate of his finances, which the expenſes of his encreaſing family had reduced to a very low ebb. From theſe circumſtances of embarraſsment he was relieved by the liberality of the citizens of Bologna, who invited him to read lectures on eloquence and moral philoſophy in their univerſity; and engaged to requite his ſervices by an annual ſtipend of four hundred and fifty gold crowns. Readily accepting this invitation, he repaired to Bologna with all convenient ſpeed. Soon after he had entered upon his new office, that city which had lately revolted from Martin V. was doomed to ſuffer the horrors of a ſiege, in conſequence of which literary purſuits were entirely ſuſpended. Thus circumſtanced, Filelfo began to feel no ſmall degree of anxiety, not only concerning

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expended a conſiderable ſum of money; and this circumſtance may honourably account for the embarraſsed ſtate of his finances, on his arrival in his native country.

concerning the means of his future ſupport, but alſo for the ſafety of himſelf and his family. His uneaſineſs was, however, mitigated by the receipt of very friendly letters from Niccolò Niccoli and Pallas Strozza, urging him to quit Bologna, and exerciſe his talents for public inſtruction in Florence. *(a)* After a negociation of ſome length, he agreed to give lectures on the Greek and Roman claſſics, for the conſideration of an annual ſalary of three hundred gold crowns, to be paid out of the revenues of the ſtate. But when he had concluded this agreement, he experienced very conſiderable difficulties in effecting his departure from Bologna, which was cloſely inveſted by the pontifical army. Theſe difficulties being at length overcome, he haſtened to Florence, where he was received with every demonſtration of reſpect, and commenced his labours with the utmoſt zeal. *(b)* The following ſketch of his firſt lectures, which is preſerved in the works of Ambrogio Traverſari, demonſtrates, that in the execution of his engagement, he exerted a moſt laudable degree of induſtry. At the dawn of day he explained and commented upon Cicero's Tuſculan queſtions, the firſt Decad of Livy, Cicero's treatiſe on Rhetoric, and Homer's Iliad. After an interval of a few hours, he delivered extraordinary lectures on Terence, Cicero's Epiſ-

(a) Ambroſii Traverſarii Epiſt. p. 1007.

(b) Filelfo arrived in Florence in the month of May, 1429.—*Philelfi Epiſt. p.* 9.

tles and Orations, Thucydides and Xenophon. In addition to this laborious courſe of inſtruction, he alſo daily read a lecture on Morals. (a) Such was the arduous taſk undertaken by Filelfo, a taſk which demanded the exertions of a literary Hercules. He was however animated to the endurance of toil by the number and dignity of his audience, which daily conſiſted of four hundred perſons, many of whom were not leſs eminent for their literary acquirements, than for the rank which they held in the ſtate. (b)

On Filelfo's arrival in Florence, he found the inhabitants of that city divided into factions, and was by no means inſenſible of the difficulties which he had to encounter in endeavouring to avoid being involved in their diſputes. (c) For the ſpace of two years he ſeems to have acted with becoming diſcretion, and to have purſued his literary occupations without rendering himſelf ſubſervient to the views of either party. His prudence was rewarded by an encreaſe of his ſalary, which was augmented, towards the latter end of the year 1432, to the ſum of three hundred and fifty gold crowns. (d) Unfortunately

(a) *Ambroſii Traverſarii Epiſt. p.* 1016.

(b) *Philelfi Epiſt. p.* 9.

(c) *Ibid.*

(d) *Ibid. p.* 10.

Unfortunately however for his peace of mind, he had not reſided long at Florence, before he began to ſuſpect that Niccolo Niccoli and Carlo Aretino, one of the moſt accompliſhed of the Tuſcan ſcholars, moved by envy of his literary fame, regarded him with ſentiments of the moſt determined hoſtility. The irritable temper of Niccolo was indeed provoked by the ſupercilious pride of the new Coryphæus, who without the leaſt reſerve of diffidence, aſſumed the high degree of eminence in the ſcale of importance to which he deemed himſelf entitled, and looked down upon the learned Florentines with undiſguiſed diſdain. Well knowing the intimacy which ſubſiſted between Niccolo Niccoli and Coſmo de' Medicis, Filelfo took it for granted, that the latter would adopt the quarrels of his friend, and conſequently apprehended that he had much to dread from the effects of his reſentment. In this apprehenſion he was confirmed by the manifeſt coolneſs with which he was treated by Lorenzo, the brother of Coſmo; and he regarded the aſſurances which he received from the latter, that his ſuſpicions with reſpect to himſelf were groundleſs, as a refinement of malice, intended to betray him into a fatal ſecurity.*(a)* His dread of the machinations of his enemies was alſo encreaſed by a violent attack made upon him in the ſtreets

(a) Philelfi Epiſt. p. 11.

of Florence, by one Filippo, a noted aſsaſsin, by whom he was ſeverely wounded in the face.*(a)*

Whilſt Filelfo was brooding over his real or imagined wrongs, a conteſt aroſe between the two factions which divided the city of Florence, in conſequence of a quarrel which had occurred between the houſes of Soderini and Guzano.*(b)* On this occaſion he publicly enliſted himſelf on the ſide of the ariſtocracy, and under the pretext of honeſt indignation againſt injuſtice, gratified his perſonal reſentment, by publiſhing a poetical philippic againſt the factious diſpoſition of the Florentine populace, into the commencement of which he introduced a violent attaek upon the family of the Medicis.*(c)* Not contented with this act of provocation, he afterwards turned the artillery of his wrath directly againſt Coſmo, whom he inſulted in a ſatire againſt confidence in riches, in which he attempted to diſguiſe the reproaches of malevolence in the garb of philoſophic advice.

The

(a) Philelfi Epist. p. 17. In the aceount which Filelfo gave of this tranſaction to Æneas Sylivius, he ſays, that he had never diſcovered by whom Filippo was hired to commit ſo execrable a deed, but intimates very ſtrong ſuſpicions of Coſmo de' Medicis. Poggio, however, in his third invective againſt Filelfo, aſserts, that the aſsaſsin was the miniſter of the vengeance of one Jeronimo of Imola, whom Filelfo had provoked by the intemperance of his tongue.
Poggii Opera, p. 181.

(b) Ibid.

(c) Francisci Philelfi Satyræ; primæ decadis hecatosticha secunda.

The well known liberality of Coſmo's diſpoſition, the laudable uſes to which he appropriated a conſiderable portion of his vaſt wealth, and the engaging familiarity with which he was accuſtomed to converſe with people of merit in every claſs of life, conſtituted the moſt convincing proof of the malignant falſehood of this libel; and the adherents of the houſe of Medicis would have done well, had they treated it with contempt. But thirſting for revenge, they endeavoured to expel the offending ſatirist from the city, by inducing the aſsembly of the people conſiderably to diminiſh the ſalaries allowed to the public inſtructors maintained by the ſtate. To this defalcation of their revenues, the other profeſsors patiently ſubmitted; but Filelfo appealed to the ſenate, and by the power of his eloquence, perſuaded that body to reſtore their literary ſervants to their former footing in point of emolument. He had alſo the good fortune to procure the abrogation of a ſecond ordinance obtained by his enemies, whereby the whole of the ſums annually granted for the ſupport of public education were marked as objects of retrenchment.*(a)*

Irritated by theſe hoſtile meaſures, Filelfo declared open war againſt Coſmo and his friends. He poured forth a torrent of invective in a ſeries of ſatires, in which the ſeverity of Juvenal, and his nauſeous delineations of atrocious

(a) Philelfi Epist. p. 12. 13.

atrocious vices, are much more ſucceſsfully imitated than the ſublimity of his moral precepts, or the dignity of his ſtyle. The bitterneſs of Filelfo's wrath was particularly directed againſt Niccolo Niccoli, whom, ſometimes under the contemptuous appellation of Utis, and ſometimes under the fanciful deſignation of Lycolaus, he charged with envy of the learned—hatred of the virtuous—extravagant anger—infidelity—blaſphemy—and the moſt diſguſting impurities which have ever ſwelled the black catalogue of human crimes.(a)

The arreſt of Coſmo de' Medicis filled the heart of Filelfo with the greateſt joy, as it not only freed him from the dread of a formidable adverſary, but alſo gratified his pride, by fulfilling certain prophetic denunciations

(a) *Philelfi Satyræ; primæ decadis hecatosticha quinta. Ejusdem hecatosticha sexta—Secundæ decadis hecatosticha prima, &c.*

In a letter of remonſtrance to Coſmo de' Medicis, Filelfo inveighed bitterly againſt Niccolo Niccoli, whom he aſserted Coſmo had himſelf acknowledged to be guilty of inſolence to the learned, and particularly of contumelious conduct towards the eminent Manuel Cryſoloras—"Ad ea tu ſane leniter reſpondiſti, ac ſubridens, non oportere inquiens mirari me nec ægre ferre Nicolai Nicoli detractionem; eo enim eſse hominem ingenio ut neminem doctum virum relinquat intactum mordacitate ſuâ, quique ne ſoli quidem ipſi parceret, *utpote qui et Manuelem Chrysoloram sapientem et summum illum virum barbam pediculosam adhuc semper nominet*, et Ambroſium monachum cui magis affectus eſt quam propriæ animæ attonitum per contumeliam vocet."

Philelfi Epistolæ p. 12.

ons with which he had concluded his ſatire againſt confidence in wealth. In the exhilaration of triumph, he exulted over the fallen demagogue, in a copy of verſes, in the concluſion of which he earneſtly exhorted the Florentine nobility not to endanger the ſafety of the ſtate, by commuting the puniſhment of death, which their priſoner merited, for the lighter penalty of baniſhment.(a) Happily for Coſmo, as it has been already related, the ſanguinary counſels of his perſonal enemies were rejected.

Thus when Poggio arrived in Florence, he found the party of his kindeſt friends reduced to a ſtate of irkſome humiliation—his moſt powerful protector driven into exile; and his moſt intimate aſſociates daily annoyed by the

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(a) *Philelfi Satyræ, quartæ decadis hecatosticha prima.*

This Satire concludes with the following atrocious addreſs to the judges of Coſmo.

" En Mundum ſervat conjectum in vincula carcer,
" Qui rebus momenta dabit non parva futuris.
" Nunc etiam atque etiam vobiſcum volvite curas,
" Et luſtrate animo quæ ſint potiora ſaluti
" Urbis conſilia: his caſtas accommodet aures
" Quiſque ſuas. Vobis res coram publica ſeſe
" Offerat in medium, referens ſtragemque necemque
" Venturas, ubi forte minus pro lege vel æquo
" Supplicium ſumptum fuerit de fonte nefando;
" Aut etiam officium collatum nuttere civis.
" Namque relegatus, ſi culpæ nomine mulctam
" Pendeat, afficiet magnis vos cladibus omnes."

the rancorous effuſions of a libeller, whoſe malignant imagination ſeemed to ſupply an inexhauſtible ſtore of topics of abuſe. By the fidelity of his attachment to the perſecuted partizans of the Medicis, he drew down upon his own head the lightening of Filelfo's wrath; and he ſoon found himſelf exhibited as a conſpicuous figure in the groups of outrageous caricaturas drawn by the bold hand of the enraged ſatiriſt. *(a)* During the exile of Coſmo, his

(a) The paſsages in Filelfo's Satires, in which he has attacked the character of Poggio, are very numerous. Thoſe who wiſh to examine theſe paſsages, may conſult the following references.

Decad. i. *hecat.* 5. *Decad.* ii. *hecat.* 1. 3. *Decad.* iii. *hecat.* 2. 10. *Decad.* iv. *hecat.* 7. *Decad.* v. *hecat.* 8. 9. *Decad.* vi. *hecat.* 10. *Decad.* viii. *hecat.* 1. 3. 5. Such readers as are not poſſeſsed of a copy of *Aureæ Francisci Philelfii Poetæ Oratorisque celeberrimi Satyræ centum*, printed in octavo at Paris, anno 1518, (a book of rare occurrence) will probably be contented with the following ſpecimen of what may be properly termed learned Billingſgate.

" Quæ rapidis natura polis, quæ cauſa ſepulchri
" Humano generi, quæ tanta licentia rerum,
" Spumantes inter pateras cereremque voracem
" Oſtenſurus erat Codrus; cum grande pepedit,
" Rancidulum eructans poſt longa volumina verbum.
" Hunc mox Oenepotes miratus rara profatur.
" Rara inter Latias phœnix hæc pervolat urbes:
" Hinc vomit et meiens grave cunctis reddit oletum.
" Poggius arridet, ſimili dum peſte tenetur.
" Nam quascunque dapes affert, ut verna Canopi
" Prælambens, rapidus vino ſeſe obruit hoſpes.
" Laudibus hinc miris effert Codrumque, bonumque
" Oenepotam Nicolum: mox ne fortaſse minoris
" Se quiſquam reputet, quod foetet olentius addit."

his dread of incurring the diſpleaſure of the ruling faction induced him to ſubmit to obloquy in ſilence, and Filelfo enjoyed the mean triumph of thoſe who wantonly malign an adverſary whoſe pen is reſtrained by the ſtrong hand of the civil power. But this triumph was of ſhort duration. The firſt year of Coſmo's baniſhment was not expired, before he was recalled by the commanding voice of the people. On his approach to the city his enemies fled; and amongſt the reſt, Filelfo, conſcious of the provocations by which he had ſtimulated his reſentment, haſtily quitted Florence, and withdrew to Siena.*(a)*

Poggio expreſsed his joy on the return of his friend in a long epiſtle, in the commencement of which he intimated that he had choſen that mode of addreſs in preference to a perſonal congratulation, in order that his commendation of his patron might be diffuſed amongſt ſuch of the learned as felt an intereſt in the peruſal of his compoſitions. He then proceeded to dilate at conſiderable length, upon the unanimity with which the Florentine people paſsed the decree for the recal of Coſmo, which, he juſtly obſerved, was a moſt diſtinguiſhed proof of his merits. "This is," ſaid he, "in my opinion, "the greateſt ſubject of congratulation in your caſe— "that all ranks concurred in bearing teſtimony to your "dignity and virtue. So earneſt was the deſire of your

(a) *Philelfi Epist. p.* 12.

" return, that the inconveniencies reſulting from your " exile, muſt be far overbalanced by the unprecedented " honour and affection with which your fellow citizens " have received you on your return to your native coun- " try." He concluded this epiſtle by exhorting his friend to perſevere in thoſe virtuous principles which had been his ſupport in the day of adverſity, and which had cauſed him to be reſtored to the exalted rank in the ſtate from which he had been for a ſhort period diſplaced by the intrigues of faction.*(a)*

Poggio had long meditated a ſignal retaliation of the inſults which he had experienced from Filelfo, and no ſooner did the Medicis regain their aſcendancy in the republic, than he proceeded to adminiſter to the acrimonious Tolentine the mercileſs ſeverity of a literary caſtigation. Wiſely ſtepping forward as the indignant friend of the injured Niccolo Niccoli, rather than as the avenger of his own wrongs, he publiſhed an invective againſt Filelfo, in which he almoſt exhauſted the Latin language in the accumulation of epithets of abuſe. Noticing the obſcenity of the ſatire which, as he ſays, Filelfo " had " vomited forth againſt his friend, from the feculent " ſtores of his putrid mouth," he reproved him for the uſe of terms and phraſes which even a ſtrumpet of any degree of reputation would be aſhamed to utter. The propenſity

(a) *Poggii Opera p.* 339—342.

propenſity of the ſatiriſt to the adoption of ſuch language, he aſcribed to the early taſte which he had acquired for impurity, in conſequence of the occupation of his mother, whom he repreſented as living at Rimini, engaged in the moſt ſordid offices.*(a)* Tracing the hiſtory of his antagoniſt from his earlieſt days, he alledged that he was baniſhed from Padua, in conſequence of his indulgence of the moſt depraved propenſities; and that when he had been hoſpitably entertained at Conſtantinople by John Cryſoloras, he repaid the kindneſs of his hoſt by debauching his daughter. By the perpetration of this crime, if credit may be given to the aſſertions of Poggio, Filelfo obtained the hand of a lady, to whom, if her conduct had been in any degree anſwerable to the nobility of her deſcent, he would never have had the audacity to aſpire.*(b)* Finally the enraged ſecretary accuſed his

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(a) " Verum nequàquam mirum videri debet, eum cujus mater Arimini " dudum in purgandis ventribus et inteſtinis ſorde diluendis quæſtum fecerit, " maternæ artis foetorem, redolere. Hæſit naribus filii ſagacis materni exer- " citii attrectata putredo et continui ſtercoris fœtens halitus."

Poggii Opera p. 165.

(b) The terms in which Poggio mentions this tranſaction, are ſuperlatively abuſive, and whimſically groſs. " Itaque Cryſoloras moerore confectus, com- " pulſus precibus, malo coactus, filiam tibi nuptui dedit a te corruptam, quæ " ſi extàtiſset integra, ne pilum quidem tibi abraſum ab illius natibus often- " diſset. An tu illam unquam duxiſſes uxorem ſi virginitatem per te ſervare " potuiſſet? Tibi pater illam dediſſet profugo, ignobili, impuro? Prima- " riis ſuæ civitatis viris ſervabatur virgo, non tibi inſulſæ pecudi et aſello

adverſary of bartering the honour of his wife for the moſt vicious gratifications, and concluded his invective by propoſing to ornament his brows—not with a wreath of laurel; but with a crown more befitting the filthineſs of his converſation.*(a)*

This ſcurrility, as it might have been naturally expected, ſerved only to inflame the hoſtile paſsions which had ſo long rankled in the breaſt of Filelfo, and to direct his fury againſt his new aſsailant. The exiled profeſsor, accordingly, once more dipping his pen in gall, traduced the morals, and vilified the talents of Poggio in the following bitter ſatire,

Lingua tibi mediâ, Poggi, plus parte ſecetur
Quâ nunquam lacerare probos et carpere ceſsas.
Improbe, quis talem tibi tantus tradidit artem
Auctor? An e ſtulto fatuoque et mentis egente
Te tuus inſanum Lycolaus reddidit Utis,
Addictum vitio dirumque per omne volutum
Flagitium

" bipedali quem ille domi alebat tanquam canem aliquem ſolent ſenio et ætate
" confectum."

Poggii Opera, p. 167.

(a) " Speraſti, monſtrum infandum hos tuos inſulſiſsimos verſus, in quibus
" etiam male latine loqueris, allaturos tibi laureolam, quâ fanaticum caput
" redimeres. At ſtercoreâ coronâ ornabuntur fœtentes crines priapæi vatis."

Ibid. p. 169.

Flagitium et facinus ?—Tantum maledicere ſemper
Edoctus, cunctos decoret quos aurea virtus
Inſequeris calamo, nequeas quos fulmine linguæ,
Quam nimius craſsam potus vel crapula fecit,
Immaniſque Venus. Tibi quæ tam dira voluptas,
Undantis pelago dum vini nocte dieque
Ebrius obrueris; dum tanquam immenſa vorago
Quidquid pontus habet, quidquid vel terra vel aër
Veſcendum peperit, latus tibi venter et ingens
Excepit; dum fœda Venus patiturque facitque
Omne genus probri: tactus te leviuſ eſto
Titillans, veſane, juvat redditque furentem
Et dulci qui tactus agit prurigine linguam:
Ut te communem præſtes ſapientibus hoſtem
Omnibus, et nulli parcas velut effera quædam
Vipera tabifero terram cœlumque veneno
Inficiens. Sileo reliquos, quos nulla ſilebunt
Sæcula, quos volitans bonitas ſuper æthera tollit.
Dic quâ laude minus dignum integritateve ſummâ
Inferius quicquam cognoveris ipſe duobus
In mirâ pietate viris, quorum alter Ethruſcâ
Urbe ſatus Senâ, verbo vitâque decorus,
Hic Bernardinus totam convertit ad aſtra
Italiam: aſt alter nulli probitate ſecundus,
Nicoleos, genuit quam dia Bononia; celſi
Pontificis junctus lateri meritiſque locoque,
Ipſum etiam Chriſtum vitâque imitatur et uſu.
At tu, qui linguæ morbo vinoſe laboras
His ſemper maledicis iners, quos terra poluſque

Et

Et probat et laudat. Solus rubigine linguæ
Inſequeris caſtos homines, vitæque ſupernæ
Cultores ; quoniam ſceleri jam deditus omni
Nil tibi turpe putes quod fert furor atque libido.
Diſsimiles nam nemo ſui dilexerit ullus.
Jungit ſola bonos æquo ſibi fœdere virtus,
Improbitaſque malis gaudet diſcrimine nullo.
At miror quæ tanta tuos vecordia ſenſus
Obtundit, quæ tanta hebetat veſania mentem,
Ne ſimules quocumque cares, probitatis amorem,
Quo videare probus. Minor eſt in crimine culpa
Dum minus exemplo reliquis nocuiſse videris.
Si te delectat vitium, cui deditus ultro
Obſequeris pareſque libens, tibi proderit, ipſo
Virtutem ſimulare loco. Qui laudibus effert
Præſtantes bonitate viros, bonus eſse putatur.
Qui laudat doctos, doctrinæ dignus honore
Ducitur. Ingenium declarat ſermo pudicum.
Callida quinetiam natura monetque docetque
Quam vigili curâ linguam tueamur et aſtu.
Hujus enim prudens clauſit sollertia linguam
Ore, ſimul duplicis cinctam munimine valli,
Quo ſic tuta labris et dentibus omnia caſte
Afferat in medium quæ mens digeſserit alta.
At tibi, bambalio, ſemper patet oris hiatus.
Futilis es totus ; nil ſani dicere curas.
Detrahis et doctis, et ſanctos polluis ore
Oſcœno. Cunctis, audax vacuuſque pudore,

Exprobrare

Exprobrare tuas penitus quibus obrutus hæres
Nequitias pergis. Quod ſi te noveris ipſum,
Aut melior fias, aut tanta licentia deſit
Futilis eloquii. Scelus eſt carpſiſſe probatos.
Hinc pater omnipotens Mariam, dum garrula Moſem
Triſtibus inſequitur dictis, punivit amaro
Ulcere. Sic linguæ damnatus crimine, pœnas
Abſalon horrendas dederat; Dariique vorarunt
Idcirco Satrapas ferali cæde leones,
Quod vitio linguæ Danieli parcere nollent.
Præterea ſtultum eſt etiam maledicere ſonti
Cum ſis turpis homo. Meretricis Thaidos ulla
Bacchis ſtupra notet? Gracchorum crimina Carbo
Damnet, et iratum Tydeus accuſet Achillem?
Ah quanto melius, Poggi, famæque tibique
Conſulere incipias, ſi te collegeris amens
Quæſieriſque ſagax penitus, ſenſuſque repoſtos
Rimatus, videas te quantus diſtrahat error,
Qui rationis inops te totum dedis habendum
Inſani ſtimulis voti facibuſque furoris.
Hinc moroſus ades, cunctis in rebus et audax
Ac turpis, nullum fugiens probrumve nefaſve,
Nec tecum verſas animo famamve futuram
Nominis impuri, vel ſummi judicis iram.
Moribus aut igitur melioribus utere, Poggi,
Aut te, bambalio, qui non ſis finge videri:
Aut ſaltem deſiſte bonis maledicere, ſemper
Importunus homo. Linguam preme cautus, et omnis
Impetus interior vultûs celetur amictu;

Sic

Sic minus offendas, et tu quoque forte viciſsim
Offendare minus. Nam ſi virtute ſupremâ
Præditus invenit qui ſe per dedecus omne
Carpat, an oppreſsus ſub vitæ ſordibus atræ
Pacem tutus agas? Si nolis eſse probatus,
Vel videare para, linguam calamumque coercens.
Omnis enim ingenio dura eſt injuria; verum
Durior indignus quam fortibus intulit ullus.

Poggio! ere long thy babbling tongue ſhall feel
The keen impreſsion of the trenchant ſteel;
That tongue, the herald of malicious lies,
That ſheds its venom on the good and wiſe.
What mighty maſter in detraction's ſchool
Thus into knavery has matured a fool?
Has Niccolo—that ſcandal of the times,
Taught thee to dare the laſt extreme of crimes?
Yes! taught by Niccolo, thou ſpreadſt thy rage
O'er the wide area of thy feeble page.
Fain wouldſt thou pour the torrent of thine ire
From lips that glow with all a Tully's fire;
But, thy weak nerves, by ſtale debauch unſtrung,
Thy half formed accents tremble on thy tongue.
Of filth enamoured, like a hideous ſwine,
Daily thou walloweſt in a ſea of wine.
Earth, air, and ocean, join their ample ſtore,
To cram thy maw, that ceaſeleſs craves for more;

And,

And, worſe than beaſt! to raiſe thy deaden'd guſt,
In nature's ſpite thou ſateſt thy monſtrous luſt.
Black liſt of crimes! but not enough to fill
Poggio, thy ample regiſter of ill.
Like ſome black viper, whoſe peſtiferous breath,
Spreads through the ambient air the ſeeds of death,
Obſcure and ſtill thou wind'ſt thy crooked way,
And unſuſpecting virtue falls thy prey.
For ſay, foul peſt! in theſe degenerate days,
Who juſtly claims the meed of general praiſe
Like Bernardino?—From Siena's walls
He ſpeeds his way where ſacred duty calls.
Attentive thouſands crowd the ſolemn fane,
And liſt in wonder, whilſt in rapturous ſtrain
He tells of bliſs reſerved for ſaints above,
And warms the heart with piety and love.
—Or ſay, amid the ſacred band who wait
In prieſtly pomp, to ſwell the pontiff's ſtate,
Whom have we ſeen, with reverend awe inſpired,
Like Santa Croce's cardinal admired?
He, Chriſt's true follower, to his God reſign'd,
With generous ardour feels for all mankind.
Theſe are the men on whoſe tranſcendent deeds,
With rankling tooth thy jealous envy feeds.
Dead to all ſenſe of ſhame, with hatred blind,
Thou vent'ſt thy malice on the pure in mind.

Behold! what powerful ſympathies retain
Congenial natures in affection's chain.

When did the baſe the ſons of honour love,
Whoſe generous deeds their frantic crimes reprove?
Foe to the good, of grovelling vice the ſlave
Reſerves his friendſhip for his fellow knave.

But Poggio! why thy villainy diſplay?
Why flaunt thy folly in the face of day?
Go—cloak thy vices with a decent veil,
Affect the modeſty thou doſt not feel,
No longer vaunt thy crimes, the public peſt,
Nor ſpread corruption through the general breaſt.
Pretend to praiſe the good, and cheaply claim
The ſplendid glories of an honeſt fame.
Scholars applaud—thyſelf ſhalt gain renown,
And learning's wreath thy empty head ſhall crown.
With prudent care correct thy ſordid phraſe;
—The witleſs world thy purity ſhall praiſe.
Hath not wiſe nature with tranſcendent ſkill
Fenc'd by a double wall the unruly ill?
Yet thou, falſe babbler! petulant, and vain,
Giv'st to thy ribald tongue the looſen'd rein.
But learn, vile wretch! the terrors that await
The envious ſlanderers of the good and great.
Lo! Miriam, ſpotted with the leprous ſtain,
Abhorr'd and exiled from the haunts of men;
And hear how Abſalom ſuſpended hung,
And paid the forfeit of a ſpiteful tongue.
Hark! to the cries that rend the vaulted cave,
Where, gaunt and fierce the tawny lions rave:

The

The limbs of ſlanderers ſwell their horrid feaſt,
Whilſt Daniel's merits ſtand in light confeſt.

Then, Poggio! ceaſe thy unavailing toil,
Virtue's bright charms by obloquy to ſoil.
Nay, wiſely conſcious of thy evil fame,
Preſume not thou the vileſt wretch to blame.
Who but muſt laugh, when with reſentment ſore,
Thais brands Bacchis as a luſtful whore,
Carbo damns faction, or the angry fire
Of Diomede, reproves Achilles' ire?
Poggio! be wiſe. By wholſome truth impreſt,
Explore the ſecrets of thy gloomy breaſt.
Learn, ſordid man! how wretched is thy fate,
The tortured ſlave of malice and of hate.
By paſsion blinded, ſcorning reaſon's ſway,
Down the full ſtream of vice thou ſpeed'ſt thy way,
Alas! unmindful of the awful doom
That waits the guilty ſoul beyond the tomb.
Repent—reform. Or, if the attempt be vain,
With toilsome ſteps to climb to virtue's fane,
No longer boaſt thy ſhame, but have the grace
In a fair maſk to hide thy odious face.
At leaſt no longer ſnarl with ſenſeleſs rage
At virtue's friends, the glory of their age.
If, inly pining with the torturing pang
Of conſcious guilt, thou whet thy venomed fang,
With ſecret wound the upright to purſue,
How canſt thou hope to 'ſcape the vengeance due?

Indignant man, with juſt reſentment's glow,
Repels the aggreſsion of a generous foe;
But when, by folly urged, the baſe-born ſlave
Uplifts his feeble arm againſt the brave,
With direful ſtrength the wrathful paſsions riſe,
And, cruſh'd to duſt, the hapleſs reptile dies.

The publication of this ſatire again rouſed the vindictive ſpirit of Poggio, who retorted the acrimony of Filelfo in a ſecond invective, in which he accuſed him of the baſeſt ingratitude to thoſe who had treated him with the moſt diſtinguiſhed kindneſs. Amongſt theſe he particularly enumerated Niccolo Niccoli, Ambrogio Traverſari, Carlo and Leonardo Aretino, Franceſco Barbaro, Guarino Veroneſe, and ſeveral others, all of whom, he aſserted, being diſguſted by the petulance and ſcandalous immorality of Filelfo, had found themſelves compelled to withdraw from him their countenance and ſupport. Warmed by his ſubject, Poggio concluded this philippic with the following impaſsioned burſt of ſcurrility. "Who "is there, Filelfo, that does not deſpiſe and contemn "you? Which of the gueſts who frequent your houſe "have any regard for you, except thoſe who compenſate "the annoyance which they receive from your conver- "ſation, by the charms of your wife. Thou ſtinking "he-goat! thou horned monſter! thou malevolent de- "tractor! thou father of lies and author of diſcord! "May the divine vengeance deſtroy thee as an enemy "of the virtuous, a parricide who endeavoureſt to ruin

"the

" the wife and good by lies and ſlanders, and the moſt " falſe and foul imputations. If thou muſt be contu- " melious, write thy ſatires againſt the ſuitors of thy " wife,—diſcharge the putridity of thy ſtomach upon " thoſe who adorn thy forehead with horns."

Such was the ſtyle in which Poggio and Filelfo, two of the moſt learned men of their age, conducted their diſputes. In their mutual accuſations, ſo evidently do they aim at exhauſting every topic of obloquy without the ſlighteſt regard to veracity, that it is impoſſible for the acuteſt judgment, by the moſt careful examination of the odious maſs of their allegations, to diſtinguiſh truth from falſehood. Thus does their acrimony defeat its own purpoſe: for who will give credit to thoſe, who, in the heat of altercation, ſet decency at defiance; and forgetting what is due to their own dignity, concentrate all their powers in an endeavour to overwhelm their adverſary by virulent and foul abuſe. It may however be obſerved, that in this unmanly warfare, Filelfo had the advantage, in conſequence of his ſuperior ſagacity in the choice of his weapons. In theſe encounters, a proſe invective is like a ponderous mace, the unmanageable weight of which is the beſt ſecurity of him at whom the blow is aimed. But he who annoys his antagoniſt by poetic effuſions, aſſails him with an inſtrument, which affords full ſcope for the exerciſe of the moſt conſummate dexterity. The effect of abuſive attacks againſt character or talents upon him who is the

ſubject

ſubject of obloquy, is generally proportionate to the reception which thoſe attacks experience from the public. And it is obvious to remark, that a dilated oration is almoſt uniformly wearisome to the reader; and few of its paſsages are remembered after its peruſal—but the happy turn of an epigram, or the pointed numbers of a lengthened ſatire, captivate the fancy, ſtrongly arreſt the public attention, and make a moſt durable impreſsion on the memory. Thus do the laſhes of poetic wit, produce a poignant and a laſting ſmart, and truly unfortunate is he, who, in conſequence of the provocation of literary wrath, becomes

"The ſad burthen of ſome merry ſong."

CHAP. VII.

THE Romans ſubmit to the arms of the pontiff—Severities exerciſed upon the revolters by Vitelleſchi—Eugenius concludes a peace with his enemies—He ſeizes a part of the Neapolitan territories—Proceedings of the council of Baſil—Poggio purchaſes a villa in Valdarno—He is exempted from the payment of taxes—His love of ancient ſculptures and monuments of art—His diſpute with Guarino Veroneſe—His marriage—His letter on that occaſion to a learned eccleſiaſtic—Poggio accompanies the pontiff to Bologna—His letter to the cardinal of St. Angelo on the ſubject of his matrimonial felicity—His reconciliation with Guarino Veroneſe—He publiſhes a collection of his letters—Death of Niccolo Niccoli—Poggio's funeral oration on that occaſion—Character of Niccolo Niccoli.

CHAP. IX.

CHAP. VII.

SOON after the commencement of the late inſurrection, which, as it has been already related, compelled Eugenius to provide for his ſafety by a precipitate flight, the Roman populace proceeded to the election of ſeven officers, to whom they delegated the moſt ample authority to enforce the preſervation of the public peace, and to promote the general welfare. On the departure of the pontiff, theſe new magiſtrates found themſelves maſters of the whole of the city except the caſtle of St. Angelo. They immediately commenced the ſiege of this fortreſs; but their efforts to reduce it were vain. In the mean time the troops of Sforza made frequent incurſions to the very gates of the city, ſpreading terror and devaſtation through the ſurrounding territory. The garriſon of the caſtle alſo harraſsed the citizens by daily ſallies. Wearied and diſheartened by the inconveniencies reſulting from this

concurrence of external and internal warfare, the degenerate Romans, at the end of the fifth month of the enjoyment of their deluſive liberty, ſurrendered their principal places of ſtrength to Giovanni de' Vitelleſchi, biſhop of Recanati, who took poſſeſſion of them in the name of the pontiff.*(a)*

Oct. 1434.

Though the ſtandard of revolt no longer waved defiance againſt eſtabliſhed government from the walls of Rome, and though the populace ſeemed to be deſirous of atoning by the humbleſt ſubmiſſion for the outrages which they had lately committed, not only againſt the authority, but alſo againſt the perſon of their ſovereign, Eugenius did not yet venture to reviſit his capital. He wiſely dreaded the effects of that agitation which uſually accompanies the ſubſiding of the ſtormy ſea of political contention. It was alſo the opinion of his counſellors, that it was neceſſary to puniſh the ringleaders of the late revolt with the utmoſt ſeverity; and he perhaps thought that thoſe princes act conſiſtently with the dictates of prudence, who, whilſt they perſonally interpoſe in the performance of beneficent and merciful actions, delegate to inferior agents the odious taſk of inflicting the ſanguinary penalties of political vengeance. He accordingly inſtructed Vitelleſchi to take ſuch meaſures as he ſhould deem neceſſary for the extinction of the moſt latent ſparks of

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(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 158.—*Platina, tom.* i. *p.* 406.

of rebellion. For the purpoſes of ſeverity he could not have ſelected a fitter inſtrument than Vitelleſchi, a man of haughty demeanour, a bigotted aſsertor of the rights of eſtabliſhed power, whoſe promptitude in action was guided by the dictates of a cool head and an obdurate heart. When the inhabitants of the pontifical ſtates were informed that their deſtiny was committed to the diſpoſal of this mercileſs eccleſiaſtic, they were ſtruck dumb with fear; *(a)* and ſuſpicion and terror ſpread a gloom over the whole of the papal dominions. No long ſpace of time intervened before the threatening cloud burſt upon the heads of the Colonnas and their partizans. Vitelleſchi, perſonally aſsuming the command of a body of troops, laid ſiege to the fortreſses which ſheltered the deſpairing remnant of rebellion. In the courſe of a few weeks he took and ſacked Caſtel Gandolfo, Sabello, Borghetto, Alba, Citta Lanuvie, and Zagarolo. All the inhabitants of theſe places who ſurvived the carnage which occurred at their capture, he carried in chains to Rome. On his return to the capital he proceeded to level with the ground the houſes of the principal inſurgents. Determined by ſtill ſeverer meaſures to ſtrike terror into the enemies of the pontiff, he ſeized one of the ringleaders of the late revolt, and after publicly expoſing him to the horrible torture of having his fleſh torn with red hot pincers, he terminated his ſuffer-

 ings

(a) " Sopravenendo poi Giovanni Vitelleſco che chiamavano il Patriarca, " entrarono in tanto ſpavento i Romani, che non avevano pure animo d' aprir " la bocca." *Platina, tom.* i. *p.* 405.

ings, by cauſing him to be hanged in the Campo di Fiore. At the ſame time, with a view of ingratiating himſelf with the populace, who dreaded the horrors of approaching famine, he imported into the city an abundant ſupply of proviſions. By this alternate exerciſe of ſeverity and conciliation, he at length completely re-eſtabliſhed the authority of the pontiff in Rome.(a)

A. D. 1435. Fortune now began to diſpenſe her favours to Eugenius with a liberal hand. In the ſpring of the year 1435, Fortebraccio, having received intelligence that Franceſco Sforza had marched into Romagna to oppoſe Piccinino, who was preparing to invade that diſtrict at the head of a large body of troops, made a forced march, and ſurprizing Leone Sforza, who had been left at Todi with an army of one thouſand horſe and five hundred foot, compelled him, and the greater part of his forces, to ſurrender at diſcretion. His triumph was however but of ſhort duration. Whilſt he was employed in the ſiege of Capo del Monte, he was attacked by Aleſsandro Sforza, and after an obſtinate engagement, in which he received a mortal wound, his troops were entirely defeated. This event, which rid Eugenius of a formidable and implacable foe, prepared the way for a treaty of peace between him and his various enemies. The pontiff derived conſiderable advantages from the terms of this treaty, in conſequence

(a) *Platina, tom.* i. *p.* 406, 407.

ſequence of which he regained poſſeſſion of Imola and Bologna, and ſaw Romagna freed from the miſeries of war.*(a)*

On the ſecond of February in this year, Joanna queen of Naples died, by her laſt will leaving the inheritance of her kingdom to Regnier of Anjou. The claim of Regnier was, however, diſputed by Alfonſo of Arragon, who, by virtue of the act of adoption which Joanna had annulled, aſſerted his title to the Neapolitan crown. Whilſt the kingdom of Naples was divided and harraſſed by theſe contending claimants, Eugenius ordered Vitelleſchi to take poſſeſſion of certain towns ſituated on its frontiers, the ſovereignty of which had long been aſſerted, and occaſionally enjoyed, by the Roman pontiffs. Vitelleſchi executed this commiſſion with his uſual good fortune; and by the conqueſts which he made in the Neapolitan territories, ſtill farther extended the power of his maſter.*(b)*

Whilſt the flames of war which had been kindled againſt Eugenius by the machinations of the duke of Milan were thus gradually extinguiſhed, the members of the council of Baſil proceeded with conſiderable diligence in the execution of the difficult taſk which they had undertaken,

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(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 162. 163.

(b) Ibid—Platina, tom. i. *p.* 407.

dertaken—the reformation of the church in its head and members. After ſettling ſome preliminary arrangements, with a view of facilitating the union of the Greek and Latin churches, and promoting the converſion of the Jews,*(a)* the aſsembled fathers proceeded to denounce againſt thoſe prieſts who diſgraced their profeſsion by keeping concubines, the penalty of the forfeiture of their eccleſiaſtical revenues for the ſpace of three months; and the farther penalty of deprivation in caſe they continued after ſolemn admonition to perſevere in their flagitious conduct.

(a) The decree relative to the converſion of the Jews ordained amongſt other things, that all dioceſans ſhould annually commiſsion certain learned theologians, to explain to them the word of God, in ſo plain a manner, that they might be convinced of their errors—that the Jews ſhould be compelled by the infliction of certain penalties, to attend the lectures of theſe theologians—that all infidels ſhould be prohibited from keeping Chriſtian ſervants or nurſes—that no Chriſtians ſhould partake of any Jewiſh feſtivals—that the Jewiſh tradesmen ſhould be ſtrictly forbidden to buy, or take in pawn, any eccleſiaſtical books, chalices, croſses, or other church ornaments—that the Jews ſhould be compelled to wear a diſtinguiſhing dreſs, and that they ſhould live in a ſeparate quarter of each town, at as great a diſtance as poſsible from any church. With regard to the converted Iſraelites, it was ordained, that whereas whatever goods or property they had obtained by uſury, or by defrauding perſons who were not to be found, became upon this converſion the property of the church, the council in the name of the church, beſtowed upon them all ſuch property as a baptiſmal preſent—that the indigent converts ſhould be relieved by the charitable aſsiſtance of the faithful—that they ſhould be ſeparated as much as poſsible from their unbelieving brethren—and that the ordinaries of each dioceſe, ſhould be directed to do all in their power to cauſe them to marry perſons who had been born in the Chriſtian faith.

conduct.*(a)* In a very long and particular decree they laid down wholeſome regulations for the decent ſolemnization of public worſhip; and ſtrictly prohibited the continuance of thoſe ſacrilegious buffooneries which it had been cuſtomary in ſome countries to celebrate in the churches on Innocent's day, or the feaſt of fools.*(b)* Eugenius perhaps felt no repugnance to give his aſsent to theſe articles of reformation. But he could not conſider with complacency a decree of the ninth of June, whereby the payment of annates, and of the firſt fruits of benefices, into the pontifical treaſury, was prohibited as an unlawful compliance with a ſimoniacal demand.*(c)*

This

(a) Concil. tom. xxx. *p.* 162.

(b) " Turpem etiam illum abuſum in quibuſdam frequentatum eccleſiis, " quo certis anni celebritatibus nonnulli cum mitrâ, baculo, ac veſtibus pon- " tificalibus more epiſcoporum benedicunt, alii ut reges ac duces induti, quod " feſtum fatuorum vel innocentium, ſeu puerorum, in quibuſdam regionibus " nuncupatur, alii larvales et theatrales jocos, alii choreas et tripudia marium " ac mulierum facientes, homines ad ſpectacula et cachinnationes movent, alii " comeſsationes et convivia ibidem præparant; hæc ſancta Synodus deteſtans, " ſtatuit et jubet tam ordinariis quam eccleſiarum decanis et rectoribus, ſub " pœnâ ſuſpenſionis omnium proventuum eccleſiaſticorum trium menſium ſpatio, " ne hæc aut ſimilia ludibria, neque etiam mercantias ſeu negotiationes nundi- " narum in eccleſiis quæ domus orationis eſse debent, ac etiam cæmeterio exer- " cere amplius permittant, tranſgreſsoreſque, per cenſuram eccleſiaſticam, ali- " aque juris remedia punire non negligant, omnes autem conſuetudines, ſtatuta " ac privilegia quæ his non concordant circa hæc decretis, niſi forte majores " adjicerent pœnas, irritas eſse hæc ſancta ſynodus decernit."

(c) Concil. tom. xxx. *p.* 166.

This ordinance he naturally detested, as tending materially to impair his revenues, and consequently to diminish his power. The spirit of hostility against the undue influence of the head of the church, which actuated the deliberations of the council, was further manifested by a decree of the twenty-fifth of March, 1436, whereby the pontiff was prohibited from bestowing the government of any province, city, or territory appertaining to the church, on any of his relatives, to the third generation inclusive.*(a)* These proceedings evidently proved that whatever benefits the synod of Basil might extend to the general community of Christians, the successor of St. Peter was likely to sustain considerable loss in consequence of its labours; and Eugenius determined to seize the earliest opportunity of throwing off its yoke.*(b)*

Whilst

(a) Concil. tom. xxx. p. 180.

(b) On the 15th of October 1435, the council condemned, as heretical, various propositions which had been lately maintained by Agostino di Roma, archbishop of Nazareth, in three elaborate theological tracts. Those whose anxiety to preserve the purity of the catholic faith, leads them to wish to know what sentiments it is their duty to reject; and those who are interested in observing the niceties of theological distinctions, will perhaps be gratified by the following recital of the dangerous errors which incurred the severe reprehension and reprobation of the venerable synod of Basil.

"Et potissime scandalosam illam assertionem, erroneam in fide, in ipso "libello contentam, quam piæ fidelium aures sine horrore audire non possunt, "videlicet: Christus quotidie peccat, et ex quo fuit Christus quotidie peccavit, "quamvis de capite ecclesiæ Christo Jesu Salvatore nostro dicat se non intelli- "gere, sed ad membra sua, quæ cum Christo capite unum esse Christum

Whilſt the power and activity of the pontiff's enemies ſeemed to throw a conſiderable degree of uncertainty upon his future deſtiny, Poggio appears to have made preparations permanently to fix his reſidence in the Tuſcan territory. With this view he purchaſed a villa in the pleaſant diſtrict of Valdarno. In the choice of the ſituation of his intended manſion, he was guided by that love of rural retirement which is generally experienced by men of contemplative minds, who are compelled by the nature of their occupation to engage in the active ſcenes of ſociety. To him who has been diſtracted by the

" aſſeruit, intelligentiam ejus eſſe referendam dicat. Nec non et propoſitiones " iſtas, et eis in ſententiâ ſimiles, quas in articulos damnatos in ſacro Conſtan- " tienſi Concilio incidere declarat, videlicet: Non omnes fideles juſtificati ſunt " membra Chriſti, ſed ſoli electi, finaliter in perpetuum regnaturi cum Chriſto. " Secundum ineffabilem præſcientiam Dei ſumuntur membra Chriſti, ex quibus " conſtat eccleſia, quæ tamen non conſtat niſi ex eis qui ſecundum propoſitum " electionis vocati ſunt. Non ſufficit Chriſto uniri vinculo caritatis, ut aliqui " efficiantur membra Chriſti, ſed requiritur alia unio. Has etiam quæ ſe- " quuntur: Humana natura in Chriſto, vere eſt Chriſtus. Humana natura in " Chriſto, eſt perſona Chriſti. Ratio ſuppoſitalis determinans humanam naturam " in Chriſto non realiter diſtinguitur ab ipſâ naturâ determinatâ. Natura humana " in Chriſto procul dubio eſt perſona verbi; et Verbum in Chriſto naturâ aſsumpta, " eſt realiter perſona aſsumens. Natura humana aſsumpta a verbo ex unione " perſonali, eſt veraciter Deus naturalis et proprius. Chriſtus ſecundum voluntа- " tem creatam tantum diligit naturam humanam unitam perſonæ verbi, quantum " diligit naturam divinam. Sicut duæ perſonæ in divinis ſunt æqualiter diligibiles " ita duæ naturæ in Chriſto, humana et diuina, ſunt æqualiter diligibiles prop- " ter perſonam communem. Anima Chriſti videt Deum tam clare et intenſe, " quantum clare et intenſe Deus videt ſeipſum. Quas quidem propoſitiones, et " alias ex eâdem radice procedentes, in prædicto libello contentas, tamquam " erroneas in fide, damnat et reprobat hæc ſancta Synodus.

Concil. tom. xxx. *p.* 172.

buſtle and tumult of a court, whoſe ſpirits have been jaded by the empty parade of pomp, and whoſe ingenuous feelings have been wounded by the intrigues of ambition, the tranquil pleaſures and innocent occupations of a country life appear to poſſeſs a double charm.

Whilſt Poggio was thus providing for himſelf a place of peaceful retirement, he received from the adminiſtrators of the Tuſcan government a teſtimony of reſpect, equally honourable to the givers and to the receiver. By a public act which was paſsed in his favour, it was declared, that whereas he had announced his determination to ſpend his old age in his native land, and to dedicate the remainder of his days to ſtudy; and whereas his literary purſuits would not enable him to acquire the property which accrued to thoſe who were engaged in commerce, he and his children ſhould from thenceforth be exempted from the payment of all public taxes.*(a)*

The fortune of Poggio was, indeed, ſtill very ſmall, and conſequently his villa could not vie in ſplendor with the palaces of the Tuſcan ariſtocracy; but he wiſely attempted to compenſate by taſte what he wanted in magnificence. In purſuance of this deſign he rendered his humble manſion an object of attention to the lovers of the liberal arts, by the treaſures of his library, and by a ſmall collection of ſtatues, which he diſpoſed in ſuch a manner

(a) Apostolo Zeno Dissertazioni Vossiane, tom. i. p. 37, 38.

manner as to conſtitute a principal ornament of his garden, and the appropriate furniture of an apartment which he intended to dedicate to literary converſation.*(a)*

The ſtudy of ancient ſculpture had long engaged the attention of Poggio, who was not leſs diligent in reſcuing its relics from obſcurity, than in ſearching for the loſt writers of antiquity. During his long reſidence in Rome, he aſsiduouſly viſited the monuments of imperial magnificence, which fill the mind of the traveller with awe, as he traverſes the ample ſquares and ſuperb ſtreets of the former miſtreſs of the nations. The ruins of theſe ſtupendous edifices he examined with ſuch minute accuracy, that he became familiarly acquainted with their conſtruction, their uſe, and their hiſtory.*(b)* Hence the learned men who had occaſion to repair to the pontifical court, were ſolicitous to obtain his guidance in their viſits to theſe wonderful ſpecimens of induſtry and taſte.*(c)*

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 65, 67. Mehi vita Ambrosii Traversarii, p. lii.

(b) The catalogue of reliques of Roman architecture, which Poggio has inſerted in the intereſting pröemium to his dialogue *De varietate Fortunæ*, evinces the diligence and care with which he had ſurveyed the ruins of ancient Rome. This catalogue did not eſcape the extenſive reſearches of Gibbon, who has introduced it into the 71ſt chapter of his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

(c) "Poggius noſter ſæpe mecum eſt; reliquias civitatis probe callens nos "comitatur." *Ambrosii Traversarii Epistolæ, p. 407.*

In a letter to Bartolomeo Faccio, Poggio thus invites him to viſit the ruins

Whenever the avarice or the curioſity of his contemporaries prompted them to ſearch into the ruined magnificence of their anceſtors, Poggio attended the inveſtigation, anxious to recover from the ſuperincumbent rubbiſh, ſome of thoſe breathing forms, the offspring of Grecian art, which the refined rapacity of Roman imperators had ſelected from amongſt the ſpoils of Greece, as ornaments worthy to adorn the temples and palaces of the capital of the world Nor did he confine theſe reſearches to the precincts of Rome. The neighbouring diſtrict witneſsed his zeal for the reſtoration of the monuments of ancient ſculpture. With this intereſting object in view, he viſited Crypta Ferrata, Tuſculum, Ferentinum, Alba, Arpinum, Alatrinum, and Tiburtum.*(a)* Whilſt he was fitting up his villa, he had the good fortune to paſs through the diſtrict of Caſentino, at the time when an antique buſt of a female was diſcovered by ſome workmen who were employed in digging up the foundation of a houſe. This buſt he purchaſed and added to his collection.

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of Rome. "Video te cupere urbem viſere, et certe niſi incoeptum opus, ut "ais, impediret, hortarer te ad inſpiciendas reliquias ejus urbis quæ quondam "orbis lumen præclariſsimum fuit. Equidem quamvis in eâ jam pluribus annis "ab ipsâ juventute fuerim verſatus, tamen quotide tamquam novus incola "tantarum rerum admiratione obſtupeſco, recreoque perſæpe animum viſu "eorum ædificiorum, quæ ſtulti propter ingenii imbecillitatem a Dæmonibus "facta dicunt."

Facius de viris Illustribus, p. 97.

(a) Mehi Vita Ambrosii Traversarii, p. lii.

tion.*(a)* His inquiries after ſpecimens of ancient art were alſo extended into diſtant countries. Being informed that one Franceſco di Piſtoia was on the eve of embarking for Greece, he requeſted him with the utmoſt earneſtneſs, to procure for him any relics of Grecian ſtatuary which he might be able to obtain in the courſe of his travels.*(b)* At the ſame time he wrote to a Rhodian, of the name of Suffretus, a celebrated collector of antique marbles, to inform him that he could not beſtow upon him a greater pleaſure, than by tranſmitting to him one or more of the pieces of ſculpture which he might be able to ſpare out of his well furniſhed gallery.*(c)* Suffretus, actuated by a noble ſpirit of liberality, immediately on Franceſco's arrival in Rhodes, conſigned to his care three marble buſts, one of Juno, another of Minerva, and the third of Bacchus, ſaid to be the works of Polycletus and Praxiteles, and one ſtatue of the height of two cubits, all which he deſtined for Poggio.*(d)* The annunciation of this intelligence was received by Poggio with the highest exultation. The names of ſuch eminent artiſts as Polycletus and Praxiteles raiſed, indeed, in his mind a prudent degree of ſcepticiſm: but he dwelt with fond anticipation

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(a) Mehi Vita Ambrosii Traversarii, p. lii.

(b) Poggii Opera, p. 321.

(c) Ibid.

(d) Ibid. p. 329.

anticipation upon the pleaſure which he ſhould experience on the arrival of the buſts; and he inſtantly aſſigned to each of his expected gueſts their proper ſtations in his villa. "Minerva," ſays he in a letter to Niccolo Niccoli, "will not, I truſt, think herſelf improperly ſituated beneath my roof—I will place her in my library. "I am ſure Bacchus will find himſelf at home in my "houſe: for if any place is his appropriate reſidence, that "place is my native diſtrict where he is held in peculiar "honour. As to Juno, ſhe ſhall retaliate the infidelities "of her ſtraying huſband by becoming my miſtreſs."*(a)*

The buſts in queſtion arrived in ſafety at the place of their deſtination;*(b)* but Franceſco alledged that the ſtatue had been ſtolen out of the ſhip in which he returned from Greece.*(c)* Poggio ſtrongly ſuſpected that the plunderer who had deprived him of this portion of his

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(a) Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. lii. liii.

(b) From an expreſsion which Poggio uſes in a letter on the ſubject of Franceſco's conduct, addreſsed to Andreolo Giuſtiniano, it ſhould ſeem, either that the buſts did not anſwer the expectation which he had formed concerning the exquiſiteneſs of their workmanſhip, or that he ſuſpected that Franceſco had ſubſtituted inferior pieces of ſculpture, in the place of thoſe deſtined for him by Suffretus. The following is the expreſsion in queſtion. "Cum Suf-"fretus quidem Rhodius ei conſignaſset tria capita marmorea, et ſignum inte-"grum duorum fere cubitorum, quæ Franciſcus ſe ad me alla turum promiſit, "*capita quædam dedit,* ſigno autem me fraudavit," &c. Perhaps, however, quædam, is by an error of the preſs, ſubſtituted for quidem.

(c) Poggii Opera, p. 329.

his expected treaſure, was no other than Franceſco himſelf. In this ſuſpicion he was confirmed by his ſubſequent conduct. For this faithleſs agent, having been afterwards commiſsioned by Andreolo Giuſtiniano, a Genoeſe of conſiderable learning, to convey to Poggio ſome antique buſts, diſpoſed of this valuable depoſit to Coſmo de' Medicis. Poggio did not tamely bear this injury, but inveighed againſt the diſhoneſty of the Piſtoian with great bitterneſs in a letter which he addreſsed to Giuſtiniano.*(a)* From this letter it appears, that in addition to his groups of antient ſtatues, Poggio had adorned his villa by a collection of antique coins and gems. To theſe purſuits he was inſtigated, not merely by the deſire of illuſtrating the claſsic authors, by a reference to works of ancient art, but alſo by an enthuſiaſtic admiration of the ſculptured wonders, the productions of men endowed with ſuperlative talents, who, riſing from individual to general nature, combined in their imaginations and embodied with their plaſtic hands, thoſe finiſhed forms, which, as it were, fill the mind of the ſpectator, and raiſe him to the exalted idea of perfection.*(b)* On this

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 329.

(b) The admirer of ancient art will find the principles, the obſervance of which led to the perfection to which it was carried, clearly and forcibly explained in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth pages of Mr. Fuſeli's *Lectures on Painting*. Of this work it may be ſafely aſserted, that hardly any compoſition in the Engliſh language comprehends an equal quantity of thought in the ſame compaſs of expreſsion. Almoſt every ſentence which it contains is a theme of reflection, a text, pregnant with the moſt uſeful inſtruction.

this ſubject he thus expreſsed himſelf in a letter to Franceſco di Piſtoia—" I am ſtruck with awe by the " genius of the artiſt, when I ſee the powers of nature " herſelf repreſented in marble. Different men are " viſited by different diſeaſes. My infirmity is an ad- " miration of the works of excellent ſculptors: for I " cannot but be affected with aſtoniſhment by the ſkill " of the man, who gives to inanimate ſubſtance the " expreſsion of animation."*(a)*

Whilſt Poggio was thus occupied in adorning his rural reſidence, he received a letter from one of his correſpondents named Scipio of Ferrara, who requeſted him to give him his opinion upon the queſtion, whether Cæſar or Scipio Africanus were the greater man. The diſcuſsion of ſubjects of this deſcription may give ſcope to a diſplay of hiſtorical knowledge; but it is ſeldom productive of much utility. It is, perhaps, a proper exerciſe for youth; but it is hardly worthy of the exertion of talents matured by age. In compliance, however, with the wiſhes of his friend, Poggio drew up an elaborate compariſon between the two eminent men in queſtion, in the courſe of which he entered much in detail into the hiſtory of their reſpective actions. After this induction of particulars, he compreſsed his arguments into a general ſtatement of his opinion, that the youth of Scipio was diſtinguiſhed by the pureſt morals, whilſt the early years

(a) *Poggii Epist.* lvii. *p.* 181.

years of Cæſar were rendered infamous by his vices, that the former, inſpired with the ſpirit of patriotiſm, by his ſplendid military achievements reſcued his country from deſtruction; and that the latter, prompted by ambition, too ſucceſsfully exerted his extraordinary talents to effect the ſubverſion of the commonwealth—that conſequently, whilſt Scipio was by no means inferior to Cæſar in the fame of his military exploits, he was greatly his ſuperior in virtue, which alone conſtitutes the character of a truly great man.*(a)*

This diſsertation on the comparative merits of Cæſar and Scipio is ingenious and intereſting; and in the pronunciation of his deciſion, Poggio was certainly guided by the principles of ſound morality. It might reaſonably have been expected, that an inquiry into the characters of two illuſtrious ancients would be productive of nothing but amuſement and inſtruction; and little did Poggio imagine, that any of his contemporaries would be inflamed with reſentment by the freedom of his ſtrictures upon the accompliſhed vanquiſher of Roman liberty. But his treatiſe falling into the hands of Guarino Veroneſe, who at this time filled the profeſsor's chair in the univerſity of Ferrara, that renowned preceptor, either actuated by intolerant zeal in defence of the reputation of Cæſar, or influenced by a deſire of paying

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 357, & ſeq.

his court to Leonello d'Eſte, who had frequently declared himſelf an admirer of the dictator's character, compoſed a long anſwer to the inquiry of Poggio. The ſpirit and ſtyle of this compoſition were by no means compatible with the friendly ſentiments which Guarino profeſsed to entertain of his antagoniſt. In a kind of preface which he prefixed to it, he contemptuouſly beſtowed upon Poggio the appellation of Cæſaromaſtix, and aſserted, that in his attack upon the character of Cæſar, he was rather audacious than brave.*(a)* Poggio was much diſpleaſed by this provocation, and loſt no time in replying to the unexpected ſtrictures of the Ferrareſe profeſsor. In this inſtance, however, he had the diſcretion to reſtrain his anger within due bounds. Avoiding as much as poſsible, any altercation with Guarino, he addreſsed himſelf to Franceſco Barbaro, in a long epiſtle, in which he dilated his original arguments, and confirmed them by ample authorities. In the introduction to this letter, he complained in a manly ſtrain of dignity, of the conduct of Guarino, who had wantonly wounded his feelings, by intermixing perſonal reflections in the diſcuſsion of a literary queſtion, on which all ſcholars were equally entitled to unlimited freedom of opinion. In this defence of his ſentiments, Poggio exhibited much learning and acuteneſs, and evinced

(a) *Poggii Opera, p. 366.*

evinced the ſkill of a practiſed diſputant. As Guarino did not proſecute the diſcuſsion of this ſubject, it may be preſumed that he felt due compunction for the breach of friendſhip into which he had been inadvertently betrayed, and that, overpowered by the ſuperior abilities of his opponent, he ſhrunk from a renewal of the combat.

Soon after the termination of this controverſy, Poggio happily loſt the remembrance of the uneaſineſs occaſioned by the mutual recrimination of polemic diſquiſitions, in the tender aſsiduities of honourable courtſhip. As he was now arrived at the advanced age of fifty-five, the intemperate heat of his paſsions was allayed, and the remonſtrances of his friend, the cardinal of St. Angelo, on the ſubject of his unlicenſed amours, began to make an impreſsion on his mind. He was alſo weary of the unſettled ſtate in which he had hitherto lived, and ſighed for the participation of thoſe domeſtic comforts, which heighten the pleaſures, and alleviate the ſorrows of human life. He accordingly ſought amongſt the Tuſcan ladies for a partner of his future fortunes. The object of his reſearch he found in Vaggia, the daughter of Ghino Manente de' Bondelmonti, a lady of a wealthy and honourable family, to whom he was united in the latter end of the month of December, 1435.(a) Dec. 1435.
From a memorandum inſerted in a diary kept by Manente,

(a) *Poggii vita a Recanatio, p.* xiv.

nente, it appears, that he gave Poggio, together with his daughter, a portion of ſix hundred florins.*(a)* Pecuniary affairs do not, however, appear to have occupied much of the attention of the bridegroom, whoſe gallantry led him to dwell with happy pride upon the moſt valuable of all dowries—the beauty and virtues of his ſpouſe. Previouſly to his marriage, Poggio, no doubt, deliberately weighed the probable advantages and diſadvantages which might reſult from the diſparity of the ages of himſelf and Vaggia, who had not yet ſeen eighteen ſummers: and it is much to be lamented, that the detail of his cogitations on this intereſting topic, which he digeſted into a formal treatiſe on the queſtion, *An seni sit uxor ducenda*, has not yet been laid before the public.*(b)*

Poggio's reſolution to correct the irregularity of his conduct, and to enter into the ſtate of lawful wedlock, moſt certainly merited high commendation. It is to be hoped, however, that he experienced the keeneſt remorſe of ſelf-accuſation for his former licentiouſneſs, when

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(a) Poggii vita a Recanatio, p. xiv.

(b) Apoſtolo Zeno was poſſeſsed of a copy of this treatiſe, which is written in the form of a dialogue, and is inſcribed to Coſmo de' Medicis. The interlocutors in the converſation are Niccolo Niccoli, and Carlo Aretino, the former of whom impugns, whilſt the latter maintains the propriety of a matrimonial connexion between an aged huſband and a youthful bride.

Zeno Diss. Voss. tom. i. *p.* 48.

when he found that the commencement of his reformation was to be ſignalized by an act of extreme unkindneſs. In order to prepare the way for his marriage, he was obliged to diſmiſs a miſtreſs who had borne him twelve ſons and two daughters. Nor was this the only, or the ſevereſt trial of his feelings. Four of his illegitimate children were living at the time of his ſeparation from their mother. In conſequence of his marriage, the inheritance which, previouſly to that event, he had ſecured to theſe pledges of illicit love by a bull of legitimation, was deſtined to others, and they were obliged to ſubmit to all the hardſhips of poverty.—What diſtreſsing embarraſsments crowd the train of vice; and how powerfully are the benevolent feelings excited on the ſide of virtue, when we behold the offspring of licentious paſsion deſerted by thoſe who gave them birth!*(a)*

If, however, we may give credit to Poggio's account

(a) The foregoing particulars of the hiſtory of Poggio, are narrated on the authority of his adverſary Lorenzo Valla. The teſtimony of an enemy ſhould be ſcrutinized with ſtrict ſeverity, and is in general open to ſtrong ſuſpicion of miſrepreſentation. But it is not to be ſuppoſed that Lorenzo could have been ſo blinded by his hoſtility againſt Poggio, as to hazard a narration, the circumſtances of which, if falſe, could be eaſily diſproved. The keeping of a miſtreſs, and the diſcarding her on marriage, are in all *civilized* countries, matters of ſuch general notoriety, that if the public at large are not witneſses of the fact, the narrator of ſuch tranſactions will at once be deemed convicted of falſehood. It muſt, however, be obſerved, that the account which Lorenzo gives of Poggio's fraudulently obtaining from his caſt-off miſtreſs,

count of the ſtate of his feelings on his entrance into the married life, his felicity was not interrupted by any painful reflections on the paſt, or by any uneaſy forebodings with reſpect to the future. In a letter to a learned eccleſiaſtic, he thus expreſses himſelf on the ſubject of his marriage.

" Our epiſtolary intercourſe, my dear father, has by " my omiſsion been too long ſuſpended. Do not, how- " ever, impute my ſilence to forgetfulneſs of the obliga- " tions which your goodneſs has conferred upon me; for " I can aſsure you that a ſenſe of your kindneſs is im- " preſsed upon my mind in indelible characters. The " fact is, that till lately, no event has occured in my " hiſtory, of ſufficient importance to conſtitute the ſub- " ject of a letter. But I have now to announce to you " a moſt important change in my ſituation—a change, " of which I haſten to give you the earlieſt intelligence, " in full confidence that you will participate in my joys. " You know that I have been hitherto uncertain what " courſe of life to purſue, and that I have long heſitated " whether to adopt the ſecular or the clerical character. " To the eccleſiaſtical profeſsion however I muſt confeſs, " that

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the inſtrument whereby he had conſtituted his illegitimate offspring his heirs, and deſtroying it, is not to be credited, as it is obvious, that by a new will, he could at any time have annulled an antecedent one. It ſeldom happens that men are guilty of gratuitous acts of meanneſs.

Vallæ Antidotus in Poggium, p. 222, 228.

" that I never felt any inclination. In this dubious ſtate
" of mind, I arrived at a period when it was abſolutely
" requiſite for me to fix upon ſome ſettled plan for the
" regulation of my future conduct. Determining, there-
" fore, not to ſpend the remainder of my days in unſo-
" cial ſolitude, I reſolved to marry; and though now
" declining into the vale of years, I have ventured to
" enter into the matrimonial union with a young lady of
" great beauty, and poſſeſſed of all the accompliſhments
" which are proper for her ſex. You will perhaps ſay,
" that I ought to have taken this ſtep at an earlier period.
" I confeſs it: but as the old proverb ſays, ' better late
" than never;' and you muſt remember that philoſophers
" aſsure us, that ' Sera nunquam eſt ad bonos mores
" via.' I might, indeed, have changed my condition
" many years ago; but in that caſe I ſhould not have
" obtained my preſent ſpouſe, a partner in all reſpects
" ſuited to my manners and diſpoſition, in whoſe agree-
" able converſe I find a ſolace for all my anxieties and
" cares. So richly is ſhe endowed with virtues, that ſhe
" gratifies my moſt ſanguine wiſhes. This circumſtance
" is the ſource of the greateſt comfort to me; and I
" return thanks to God, who, having continually been
" propitious to me, ' has loved me even to the end,' and
" has beſtowed upon me more than I could have wiſhed.
" Well knowing your regard for me, and duly ſenſible of
" the value of your friendſhip, I have thought it my
" duty to acquaint you with my preſent circumſtances,

" and

" and to make you a partaker in my pleaſure. Fare-
" well."

This letter, which bears the date of the ſixth of February, 1436, was written in the courſe of that halcyon period, during the continuance of which the fetters of matrimony are uſually entwined with flowers, and unmixed pleaſure is ſuppoſed to be the almoſt certain portion of the newly united pair. In the ſtrictneſs of inveſtigation, therefore, it cannot be admitted as evidence of the happineſs which Poggio enjoyed in the married ſtate. Hymeneal tranſports, however ardent, are proverbially fleeting; and many a matrimonial union which has commenced in affection, has been found productive of diſguſt. From various detached paſsages, however, which occur in his future correſpondence with his friends, it appears that Poggio was not diſappointed in his hopes of conjugal felicity, and that his connexion with Vaggia was a ſource of comfort to his declining years.

April 18th A.D. 1436.

On the eighteenth of April, Eugenius quitted Florence, and transferred the pontifical court to Bologna, whither he was accompanied by Poggio, who ſoon after his arrival there, detailed his further experience of the joys of wedded love in the following letter to the cardinal of St. Angelo.

" You have frequently, moſt reverend father, exhorted
" me

" me both in converſation and by letter to adopt ſome
" ſettled courſe of life. I have at length followed your
" advice. Two plans were propoſed to my conſideration;
" to enter into the prieſthood, or to purſue ſome ſecular
" concern—To the eccleſiaſtical profeſsion I always en-
" tertained an invincible objection—I diſliked ſolitude;
" and therefore determining to enter upon civil life, I
" turned my mind to matrimony. I do not deny that
" the clerical life is by many eſteemed more peaceable
" and tranquil than that which I have choſen. It is in-
" deed, generally regarded as free from care, and as al-
" lowing the greateſt ſcope to eaſe and ſelf-indulgence.—
" The opulence which it promiſes to confer, is alſo a
" powerful motive to impel men to the adoption of it—
" a much more powerful one indeed than any conſidera-
" tions of a religious or moral nature. For what numbers
" are there whoſe inquiry is directed after wealthy bene-
" fices rather than after the rule of an upright life. It is
" deemed honourable amongſt mortals to excel others
" in pomp, to be flattered and courted by the multitude,
" to abound in riches which procure that outward ſplen-
" dor which is generally thought to conſtitute dignity.
" And it is deemed ſtill more honourable to obtain theſe
" advantages without labour, and in a ſhort time. Hence
" the clergy, ſpringing like muſhrooms in an hour, are
" rapidly advanced to the higheſt dignities. Thus it
" very frequently happens, that you are obliged to vene-
" rate as a God, a man whom you have been accuſtomed
" to deſpiſe as a mean, abject, ignoble, and ill bred charac-

" ter. By one word of the pontiff, the ignorant become " in the eſtimation of the vulgar, learned, the ſtupid " wiſe, the uninſtructed, accompliſhed—though at the " ſame time, the real character of the men, is preciſely " the ſame as it was before.

" In addition to theſe conſiderations, I was well " aware, how important is the dignified office of an ec- " cleſiaſtic; and what a weight of reſponſibility reſts " upon thoſe, who by accepting benefices, undertake " the ſpiritual guidance of their fellow men; and I was " deterred from entering upon the clerical functions by " the ſtrictneſs of the precepts which are inculcated by " the ancient doctors of the church. For when I was " informed by theſe moſt holy men, whoſe works I had " peruſed, to what uſes the wealth of the church ought " to be appropriated—that he who does not work, ought " not to eat—and that the labourer in ſpiritual things, " ought to be content with food and raiment; and when " I was conſcious that I was unfit for the diſcharge of " clerical duties; and when I knew that I could obtain " food and raiment by other, though certainly more la- " borious means; I thought it adviſable—not indeed to " contemn the former purſuit, but to adopt the latter, " which ſeemed more ſuitable to my diſpoſition. That " warfare is, I muſt confeſs, better and more illuſtrious " in which men can attain to a greater pitch of merit, " provided they conduct themſelves according to the rules " of religion and their office. But after maturely exa-

" mining

" mining my own ſtrength and ability, I was afraid of " engaging in a field, in which I ſhould incur the al- " moſt certain danger, of baſely yielding to the adverſa- " ry, or of falling in the combat, to the hazard of my " ſoul.

" Being determined therefore to employ myſelf in " ſecular concerns, in forming my matrimonial engage- " ment, I adopted thoſe principles which have obtained " the approbation of the wiſe and learned. For in the " choice of a wife, I was not influenced by riches, which " render the generality of men blind to their true inte- " reſts—nor was I prompted by a wiſh to riſe to civil " honours, or to ſtrengthen my intereſt with the great. " Theſe are objects of earneſt deſire to the multitude at " large. But I was influenced by different motives. In " looking out for a partner for life, I looked for honour, " probity, virtue, which the wiſeſt of men have declared " to be the moſt ample dower which a parent can " beſtow upon his child. Being then well acquainted " with the excellent diſpoſitions, the modeſty, and the " other characteriſtic virtues of a certain young lady of " a noble family, who had not yet compleated her eigh- " teenth year, on her I fixed my choice. The exem- " plarineſs of this lady's manners was acknowledged " by every body who was acquainted with her; and the " excellence of her character, I eſteemed her moſt ſtrik- " ing recommendation. Such indeed is her beauty, that " I cannot but occaſionally reflect with ſerioufneſs on

" the diſparity of our years—however, as I knew that
" from her tender youth, ſhe had been educated in ſuch
" a manner, that ſhe had a ſtill greater ſhare of good
" principles and of modeſty, than of beauty and grace of
" perſon, I determined to make her my own. Nor have
" I repented of my reſolution. For ſo much does ſhe
" daily riſe in my eſteem, that I continually give thanks
" to God, who, in former times, has always bleſsed me
" with more than, on account of my ſins I could poſsibly
" deſerve; and in beſtowing upon me ſo excellent a wife,
" has ſo bountifully provided for my comfort and ſatis-
" faction, that there is nothing that I can wiſh for in
" addition to his preſent mercies.

" Our friend Zucharo was accuſtomed to ſay, when he
" wiſhed to commend ſome exquiſitely dreſsed diſh, that
" it was so delicately ſeaſoned that the leaſt alteration in
" its compoſition would ſpoil it. So ſay I of my wife.
" There is nothing which I wiſh to be added to her charac-
" ter, nor any thing which I wiſh to be taken away from it.

" I muſt now tell you the reaſon why I have been
" ſo late in writing to you on this ſubject. It is a com-
" mon obſervation that there are few if any married
" men, who do not become weary of their wives in the
" courſe of a year. The pontiff has allowed me ſix
" months for my period of probation. The fifth month
" is now expired; and my wife daily grows upon my
" eſteem, and is daily more agreeable to me, and more
" compliant

" compliant with my wiſhes. Forming a conjecture as " to the future from my experience of the paſt, I am in- " ſpired by a confident expectation that I ſhall never " repent of having formed this connexion. I truſt alſo " that God will continue to me his favour. For if he " was propitious to me when I ſtrayed from the path of " moral rectitude, I may reaſonably hope, that ſince I " have entered upon the right way, he will ſhower down " his bleſſings upon me with a ſtill more liberal hand. " But whatever may happen in the courſe of the changes " which take place in this ſublunary world, I ſhall never " repent of having acted uprightly. I wiſhed to com- " municate this intelligence to you, my dear friend, in " order that you might rejoice in my joy. I am ſenſible " that the gravity of your wiſdom might claim a more " weighty ſubject of correſpondence; but the wiſeſt of " men occaſionally indulge themſelves with a little re- " laxation from ſerious purſuits. This relaxation I truſt " you will experience in the peruſal of my preſent " epiſtle." (a)

Guarino Veronſe embraced the occaſion of Poggio's marriage to renew the friendly intercourſe which had been unhappily ſuſpended in conſequence of their late diſpute. He addreſſed him on this joyful occaſion in a congratulatory letter, to which Poggio replied with the moſt cordial frankneſs. " In your epiſtle," ſaid he, " which

(a) *Poggii Epiſtolæ*, lvii. *Epiſt.* xxxvii.

" which I received by the kindneſs of Scipio of Ferrara,
" I recognize my friend Guarino, who was formerly in-
" ferior to no one in the teſtimonies of his affection
" towards me. I am happy to find, that though your
" ability in maintaining the intercourſe of friendſhip
" may have been ſuſpended, it is not loſt. I alſo am the
" ſame that I ever was—your moſt faithful friend. Be
" aſſured that my regard for you has not ſuffered the
" leaſt diminution. A difference of opinion can never
" juſtify a breach of friendſhip. Our late contention, in
" which we engaged for the purpoſe of exerciſing our
" abilities in the beſtowing of praiſe and the infliction
" of cenſure, was highly commendable. The great men
" of antiquity adopted different ſides of the queſtion in
" the ſenate and at the bar, without the leaſt infringe-
" ment of the duties of friendſhip. It would indeed
" redound to our diſgrace, if the ſimilarity of our ſtudies,
" which is uſually the firmeſt bond of union, ſhould
" diſſolve that pleaſing connexion which has ſubſiſted
" for ſo long a ſpace of time. The learned and juſtly
" renowned Franceſco Barbaro, during his late viſit to
" Florence, intimated to me his ſuſpicions, that my
" friendly regard for you was ſomewhat diminiſhed.
" I told him that his ſuſpicions were entirely groundleſs;
" that my eſteem for you was ſo far from being dimi-
" niſhed, that it was encreaſed—I alſo promiſed to write
" to you. This promiſe I ſhould certainly have imme-
" diately fulfilled, had I not been prevented by the preſs
" of buſineſs occaſioned by the departure of the pontiff.

" Accept

"Accept my thanks for your kind congratulation on "the late change in my condition. I hope I ſhall find "it productive of perpetual comfort and pleaſure. For "ſince, as Flaccus ſays, the virtue of parents is a great "dowry, I have had this alone in view, and have over- "looked riches and other recommendations, which the "generality of men regard as indiſpenſably requiſite to "the happineſs of the married ſtate. Petronius Arbi- "ter aſſerts, that wiſdom and beauty are rarely allied— "but by the favour of heaven, I am united to a wife, "who, though ſhe has not yet compleated her eighteenth "year, and is diſtinguiſhed by her beauty, is yet more "virtuous than ſhe is fair, and comprehends in her cha- "racter all the graces which adorn the female ſex. I "truſt therefore, that I have made a proviſion of com- "fort for my future years, though ſome of my friends "ſay that I am beginning a new art, at the time when "I ought to be quitting it. But it is never too late to "do what is right and honeſt: and as good poets take "eſpecial pains in poliſhing the laſt act of their play, I "am reſolved to dedicate the remainder of my days to "purity of conduct." *(a)*

About this time the literary reputation of Poggio began to be very extenſively diffuſed, and his writings became

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 355.

became an object of frequent inquiry among the learned. Several eminent ſcholars had been ſo much gratified by the peruſal of ſome of his letters, which had accidentally fallen into their hands, that they earneſtly requeſted him to publiſh a collection of his epiſtles. This requeſt could not but be highly gratifying to his feelings, and he readily took the requiſite ſteps to comply with it. He accordingly deſired Niccolò Niccoli, with whom, as being his moſt intimate friend, he had maintained a conſtant correſpondence, to ſelect from his papers ſuch of his letters as were likely to reflect luſtre on his character; and he was engaged in arranging and correcting the materials for a ſmall volume, at the time when the pontifical court was transferred from Florence to Bologna. On reſuming his taſk in the latter city, he found that Niccolo had neglected to tranſmit to him various letters which he had addreſſed to him from France and Germany, and which he thought would be peculiarly intereſting to the public, as they contained an account of his ſucceſsful exertions in ſearch of the loſt writers of antiquity. Niccolo was not ſo active as Poggio could have wiſhed in procuring for him theſe neceſsary documents. The letters in queſtion were in all probability diſperſed in the hands of various perſons, and of courſe he would experience ſome delay and difficulty in collecting them. When they at length arrived, they ſerved to complete a volume, which Poggio ſubmitted to the inſpection of the public, dedicating it to the Canonico Franceſco Mareſcalco of Ferrara.

rara.*(a)* A copy of this volume is preſerved amongſt the manuſcripts of the Riccardi library in Florence.*(b)*

(a) Though no literary works of Franceſco Mareſcalco have deſcended to poſterity, and though from the deſignation of "Franciſcum quendam Ferrarien-"ſem," by which he is mentioned in a letter from Poggio to Niccolo Niccoli, it ſhould ſeem that he was not much known, even to his contemporaries, the circumſtance of Poggio's inſcribing to him a volume of his compoſitions affords reaſonable grounds for a ſuppoſition that he was a man of learning, and of a reſpectable character. This ſuppoſition is confirmed by the reſpectful manner in which Poggio, in the following letter, thanks him for the offer of his friendſhip and the aſſurance of his eſteem.

"I have long maintained a moſt pleaſant intercourſe with my friend Scipio "of Ferrara, a man, whoſe learning and liberal manners lay an irreſiſtible claim "to my eſteem and love. We often ſpend our leiſure time in converſing to-"gether on various ſubjects, and particularly on the characters of learned and "eloquent men. Of this number he aſſures me that you are one. He informs me "that you are not only devoted to literature, which circumſtance is of itſelf a "great recommendation, but, what is of the greateſt weight, that your manners "are moſt amiable, and that you are endowed with the moſt attractive virtues. "He moreover ſays that you are very much attached to me. This is a piece "of intelligence which, I muſt confeſs, affords me the ſincereſt pleaſure; for there "is nothing, my dear Franceſco, which I have more at heart, than to gain the "eſteem and good will of my fellow mortals. You are ſenſible that he who is "favoured with the affection of his acquaintance, eſpecially of thoſe who are "dignified by their virtues, is truly rich, and poſſeſſes a ſource of ſincere "enjoyment. I therefore moſt heartily embrace your proffered friendſhip, "from which I truſt I ſhall derive both pleaſure and honour. Be aſſured of "this, that I ſhall do my utmoſt endeavour to confirm by my conduct, thoſe "friendly ſentiments which you have voluntarily conceived on my behalf.— "Farewell."

Poggii Opera, p. 307.

(b) Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. xxxiii.

The tranſmiſsion of his letters was one of the laſt acts of friendſhip which Poggio experienced from Niccolo Niccoli. Soon after the publication of his epiſtles, he received the melancholy intelligence of the death of this his earlieſt and ſteadieſt friend. He was acutely ſenſible of the ſerious loſs which he had ſuſtained by this event, Jan. 23, 1437 which took place on the 23d of January 1437; and in the ardour of his affection, he waited with impatience for the publication of ſome tribute of reſpect to the memory of the deceaſed, which he thought might juſtly be demanded from the multitude of learned men, on whom the numerous favours which they had received from the hands of Niccolo, impoſed an imperious obligation to celebrate his virtues.*(a)* In this expectation he was diſappointed. The ſcholars of Florence were, perhaps, of opinion, that panegyrics on the living were more productive of profit than encomiums on the dead. Offended by their tardineſs, Poggio reſolved, notwithſtanding the urgency and variety of his occupations, to reſcue the name of his friend from oblivion. He accordingly compoſed and publiſhed a funeral eulogium on Niccolo Niccoli; being determined, as he ſaid in a letter to Feltrino Boiardo, to merit, at leaſt, the praiſe which is due to the faithful diſcharge of the offices of friendſhip.*(b)*

In

(a) Poggii Epistolæ lvii. *p.* 273.

(b) Ibid.

In his funeral oration on Niccolo Niccoli, Poggio, adopting the character of the orator appointed to addreſs the public on the occaſion of his obſequies, introduced the eulogy of his deceaſed friend by the following exordium.

" If, citizens of Florence! it had been conſiſtent " with the dignity of the Latin muſes perſonally to " addreſs you on the preſent occaſion, they would not " have delegated this office to another—they would " themſelves, in the moſt copious and ornamented lan- " guage, have celebrated the virtues of their moſt " excellent and praiſe-worthy child. But ſince thoſe " whoſe tranſcendant majeſty prevents them from ex- " hibiting themſelves to the eyes of the public, com- " miſsion their repreſentatives to appear on their behalf— " though I know that there are many in this aſsembly, " whoſe learning, whoſe genius, and whoſe oratorical " abilities are far ſuperior to mine, I have ventured to " claim your attention—not with a view of precluding " the more enlightened efforts of others; but in hopes " that, whilſt I thus diſcharge the imperious duties of " friendſhip, my humble exertions may lead the way to " more ſplendid ſpecimens of eloquence. And ſhould " my powers fall far ſhort of the merits of the deceaſed— " ſhould I be unable to pay a tribute of reſpect in any " degree adequate to the ſervices which I have received " from him, you will, I truſt, pardon me, not merely " in conſideration of the mediocrity of my talents, but

" alſo in conſideration of the multitude of the virtues of " our departed friend. Abilities far ſuperior to any " which I poſſeſs are requiſite to execute the taſk of " enumerating, in the brief ſpace of time which is uſual- ". ly allotted to theſe occaſions, the numerous excellent " qualities of the deceaſed.—But why do I ſay deceaſed? " Niccolo undoubtedly lives, and will for ever live. He " will be held in everlaſting remembrance in the minds " of men, and he enjoys that immortality, which alone " is deſerving of the name of life. We firmly believe, " that his pure ſoul, freed from every corporeal ſtain, no " longer obnoxious to the contagion of ſin, has been at " once exalted into heaven. For he was a man of the " moſt upright conduct, endued with ſingular modeſty, " during every period of his mortal exiſtence. Connect- " ing the ſtudy of polite learning with that of the ſacred " ſcriptures, he aſcended from knowledge to practice; " and rendered his literary purſuits ſubſervient to the " regulation of his moral conduct. In order that you " may become more particularly acquainted with his " character, permit me to enter a little at large upon the " ſubject of his ſtudies and learning, his moral qualities, " and the uprightneſs of his converſation. For the con- " templation of the example of excellent men, is a power- " ful incitement to an imitation of their virtues."

Purſuing the method thus pointed out, Poggio proceeded to give an account of the education and early purſuits of his friend, and made honourable mention of the

the good ſervices which he had rendered to the cauſe of literature. He next entered into a particular detail of his virtuous diſpoſitions, celebrating, with appropriate praiſe, his prudence, his benevolence, his fortitude, his contempt of wealth, and the gravity of his manners. At length, mentioning the ſerenity with which he met his diſſolution, he thus concluded. " Oh fatal day! bitter " indeed to us; but to him the happy termination of " evils. At thy deſtiny, Niccolo, (for I will once more " addreſs our departed friend)—at thy deſtiny I rejoice, " for thou inhabiteſt the abodes of the pious, and art " entered into the manſions of eternal reſt. It is for " myſelf I grieve—on my own account I lament this " fatal day, which has deprived me of thy delightful " converſe, of thy tender affection, which has robbed " me of the fruit of my ſtudies, which has torn from " me him whom I regarded as my friend and father, " to whom I was accuſtomed freely to communicate my " cares, my thoughts, my every word and deed. Juſtly " is this day to be lamented by me, in which I have loſt " the conſolation of my ſorrows, the alleviation of my " griefs, and the firmeſt ſupport of my labours. No " longer ſhall I be permitted to converſe with thee, to " aſk thy advice, to rely upon thy friendly exertions. " This conſolation I will however retain; I will recal " the memory of paſt times, and whilſt I imbibe the " vital air I will dwell on thy ſweet remembrance, and " embrace thee in idea. The image of my friend ſhall " be perpetually preſent to my eyes, and ſince, alas! he

" is

" is numbered amongſt the ſilent dead, in the celebration " of his virtues I will teſtify the gratitude which I feel " for the numerous acts of kindneſs which I have ex- " perienced from him during his life." *(a)*

The generality of ſcholars are not, perhaps, aware of the debt of gratitude which they owe to Niccolo Niccoli. If, however, they derive pleaſure and improvement from the peruſal of the claſsic authors of Greece and Rome, they ought to hold him in reſpectful remembrance; for to his liberality and to his induſtry, the recovery and diffuſion of many of the writings of the ancients may be juſtly aſcribed. His pecuniary aſsiſtance enabled Poggio to ſupport the expenſes which he incurred in the courſe of his reſearches after neglected manuſcripts; his aſsiduous diligence in tranſcribing the works of the luminaries of Grecian and Roman literature, multiplied the copies of thoſe exemplars of true taſte. *(b)* In the acquiſition of books, he ſet no bounds to his expenſes; and the inconſiderateneſs of the zeal with which he added to the ſtores of his library, ſometimes reduced him to the verge of poverty. *(c)* His reſearches after the memorials of ancient genius were not confined to manuſcripts. Inſpired by a love

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(a) Poggii Opera, p. 270—277.

(b) See the note on chap. iii. of this work.

(c) Poggii Opera, p. 274.

a love of the arts, he eagerly availed himſelf of every opportunity which occurred, of purchaſing antique ſtatues, coins and gems. So extenſive was his collection of theſe intereſting relics of paſt magnificence, that Poggio aſſerts in his funeral oration, that it exceeded the aggregate amount of all other collections of the ſame kind.*(a)* He did not, like a literary miſer, moroſely brood over the treaſures of his library and his cabinet in unſocial ſelfiſhneſs. His doors were always open to the learned, and to thoſe who entertained a deſire to improve their underſtanding by ſtudy. The ingenuous youth, who wiſhed to gain acceſs to the fountains of knowledge, found in Niccolo a protector and a guide. Extending his patronage of literature beyond the period of his mortal exiſtence, by his laſt will he bequeathed his library, which conſiſted of upwards of eight hundred volumes, to the uſe of the public.*(b)*

It does not appear that he was the author of any literary work, except a ſhort treatiſe on the orthography of the Latin language, in which he attempted to ſettle various diſputed points on this ſubject, by the authority of

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(a) " Delectabatur admodum tabulis et ſignis ac variis colaturis priſcorum " more. Plura enim prope ſolus atque exquiſitiora habebat quam cæteri fere " omnes."

Poggii Opera, p. 276.

(b) Ibid.

of ancient inſcriptions.*(a)* One of his contemporaries*(b)* attributes his literary ſilence to the faſtidiouſneſs of his taſte, which led him to form in his own mind a ſtandard of excellence, to which he deſpaired of attaining in the practice of Latin compoſition. Leonardo Aretino, in the irritation of his mind, occaſioned by his unfortunate quarrel with Niccolo, aſcribed his declining to appear in the republic of letters in the character of an author, to his utter ignorance of the Latin language.*(c)* But this is undoubtedly one of thoſe calumnies in which the ſcholars of that age indulged their ſpleen, without feeling the ſlighteſt compunction of conſcience. To ſay nothing of the commendations of the literary acquirements of Niccolo, which occur in the writings of his learned contemporaries, his ample library may be regarded as an evidence of his ſcholarſhip. In

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(a) Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. lxii.

(b) Gianozzo Manetti, who wrote memoirs of Niccolo Niccoli, which are printed from a Vatican MS. in Mehus's life of Ambrogio Traverſari, *p.* lxvi. *et ſeq.* " Raro tamen," ſays Gianozzo, " vel nunquam, latine loquendi, latineve " ſcribendi onus ſuſcipere voluit, eâ de cauſâ abductus, ut arbritror, quod quum " nihil ab eo niſi plenum et perfectum probaretur, neque orationes, neque ſcripta " ſua ſibi ipſi omni ex parte, ceu in aliis hominibus exigebat, ſatisfactura " videbantur." The teſtimony of Poggio may be adduced in confirmation of Gianozzo's aſſertion. " Cum enim nihil niſi politum ac perfectum probaret, " nequaquam ſibi ipſi ejus ſcripta ſatisfacere videbantur."

Poggii Opera, p. 274.

(c) Mehi vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. lxi.

In modern times, the poſſeſſion of an extenſive and valuable collection of books is not of itſelf a certain proof of learning. But when it is conſidered that Niccolo had himſelf tranſcribed many of the volumes which adorned the ſhelves of his library, and that in the copies which he made of the Roman claſsics he divided the reſpective ſubjects into chapters, and prefixed to theſe diviſions an abſtract of their contents—what reaſon can there be to entertain doubts of his literary abilities? Several of the ancient writings recovered by Poggio abounded in errors, which Niccolo corrected in his tranſcripts; and he was accuſtomed to ſettle the text of the Latin authors by the compariſon of various manuſcripts. The execution of this taſk required conſiderable learning, and in its performance he appears in the venerable character of the parent of the uſeful art of verbal criticiſm.*(a)*

(a) " Illud quoque animadvertendum eſt Nicolaum Nicolum veluti parentem " fuiſſe artis criticæ, quæ auctores veteres diſtinguit emendatque. Nam quum " eos auctores ex vetuſtiſsimis codicibus exſcriberet, qui ſuo potiſsimum conſilio, " aliorum vero operâ inventi ſunt, non ſolum a mendis quibus obſiti erant ex- " purgavit, ſed etiam diſtinxit capitibusque locupletavit. Teſtis ſit Lucretius, " qui in Cod. Chart. Bibliothecæ Mediceo-Laurentianæ adſervatur. In hoc " enim codice manu Nicolai Niccoli diligentiſsime ſcripto aliquot libris capitula " præfixa a Niccolo ſunt. Teſtes duodecim Comoediæ Plauti noviter eodem " ſæculo repertæ, Niccolique noſtri manu in Cod. Chartaceo Bibliothecæ Mar- " cianæ ut ſupra diximus exaratæ. Has enim quum deſcripſiſset ex vetuſtiſsimo " Codice Jordani Cardinalis Urſini ex Germaniâ Romam advecto, quem men- " doſiſsimum judicavit Poggius; earum tamen exemplum a Niccolo noſtro " confectum paucis mendis, iiſque leviſsimis deturpatum eſt."

Mehi vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. l.

Restricting himself to the discharge of the higher duties of benevolence, in the conferring of important favours, Niccolo unfortunately neglected those lesser offices of good will, which, though apparently trifling when considered individually, have in the aggregate a considerable influence upon the comfort and happiness of human life. He was prone to anger, quick in finding fault, and prompt in giving utterance to his resentful feelings. (a) United with such a disposition, the possession of the dangerous faculty of sarcastic wit was to Niccolo a most serious misfortune; (b) as it too frequently betrayed him into that provoking intemperance of speech which called into exercise the forbearance of his friends, and excited the bitter enmity of those whose pride or passion would not permit them occasionally to give way to his sallies of peevishness. In consequence of the indulgence of his ill-humour, the honour which accrued to him from his exertions to induce Manuel Crysoloras and Guarino Veronese to instruct the ingenuous youth of Florence in the Greek language, is tarnished by his quarrels with those eminent scholars, which, it is alledged, caused them to quit the Tuscan capital in disgust. But if he was impetuous in his passion, he was open to a conviction of his error, and listened with patience to the admonitions of friendship.

(a) *Gianotti Manettii Vita Nicolai Nicoli apud Mehi Vitam Ambros. Travers. p.* lxxvi.

(b) *Ibid, p.* lxxvii.

friendſhip. Thoſe who were intimately acquainted with his character pardoned his occaſional fits of moroſeneſs, in conſideration of the intrinſic generoſity of his heart. Niccolo was of a middling ſtature, inclined to corpulency, and in his countenance there appeared a happy mixture of cheerfulneſs and gravity. His bodily ſenſes were remarkably acute, and he had cultivated them to a degree of faſtidiouſneſs.*(a)* He was ſplendid in his dreſs; but this was the extent of his luxury. His hall was not crowded by a numerous retinue of ſervants. Contented with the miniſtration of Benvenuta alone, he did not profeſs to aſtoniſh and gratify his viſitors by the magnificence of ſumptuous banquets; but in his inſtructive converſation, and in the peruſal of the claſsic volumes which adorned his library, his literary friends enjoyed that feaſt of reaſon which they could not meet with in more ſuperb abodes.

(a) Theſe and the following particulars are collected from a life of Niccolo Niccoli, written by Gianozzo Manetti, and compoſing part of a volume *De Illuſtribus Longævis*, dedicated by him to Lodovico Guſman, governor of the province of Calatrava. In proof of the delicacy of Niccolo's feelings, Gianozzo aſſures his reader of the wonderful fact, that he diſliked the braying of an aſs, the grating of a ſaw, and the ſqueaking of a mouſe caught in a trap. "Neque "rudentem aſinum, neque ſecantem ſerram, neque muſcipulam vagientem "ſentire audireve poterat."

Mehi Vita Ambros. Travers. p. lxxvii.

CHAP. VIII.

***PROCEEDINGS** of the council of Baſil againſt Eugenius—The pontiff transfers the council to Florence, and afterwards to Ferrara—Alfonſo of Arragon hoſtile to Eugenius—Opening of the council of Ferrara—The deputies of the Greek church repair to that city—Reconciliation of the Latin and Greek churches—Beccatellis' Hermaphroditus ſolemnly cenſured—Brief account of Beccatelli—Poggio's letter of reproof to Beccatelli on the publication of the Hermaphroditus—Eugenius depoſed by the council of Baſil—Amedeus duke of Savoy elected as pope by that ſynod—Cardinal Julian joins the party of Eugenius—Ambrogio Traverſari friendly to Eugenius—Ambrogio's death and character—Birth of Poggio's eldeſt ſon—Letter of Cincio on that occaſion—Curious correſpondence between Poggio and the duke of Milan—Continuance of the quarrel between Poggio and Filelfo—Poggio's dialogue on Nobility—His correſpondence with Gregorio Corriario in defence of that dialogue—Death of Lorenzo de' Medicis—Poggio's funeral eulogium on Lorenzo.*

CHAPTER VIII.

CHAP. VIII.

WHILST the pontiff was guarding his intereſts in Italy, the council of Baſil was ſtudiouſly employed in driving him to extremity. The decrees of that aſſembly, whereby the payment of Annates into the pontifical treaſury was prohibited, and the poſitive reſtrictions which it had impoſed upon the head of the church in the diſtribution of the temporal powers and honours attached to the holy ſee, compelled Eugenius to adopt deciſive meaſures. Setting the council at defiance, he continued to levy the taxes upon eccleſiaſtical promotions, which had been ſo expreſsly condemned as ſimoniacal, and deprived of their benefices all thoſe who, in compliance with its requiſitions, refuſed to pay the ſums which he demanded as his due. In the continuance of his neareſt relatives in places of power and truſt, he evinced a ſimilar contempt of the ordinances of the ſynod. Irritated by theſe acts of contumacy,

July 31ſt, 1437. tumacy, the aſsembled fathers, on the thirty-firſt day of July 1437, formally impeached the pontiff as obſtinately impeding the deſired reformation of the church, as violating the eccleſiaſtical conſtitutions, as guilty of the ſcandalous offence of ſelling benefices to the higheſt bidder, and beſtowing them on unworthy candidates in compliance with the deſire of powerful men. After reciting theſe, and various other heads of accuſation, they ſummoned Eugenius to appear and anſwer for himſelf within the ſpace of ſixty days, under pain of incurring ſuch penalties as the council, in caſe of his refuſing to comply with its requiſitions, ſhould think fit to impoſe upon him.*(a)*

Far from being intimidated by theſe menaces, Eugenius, in full conſiſtory held at Bologna, iſsued a bull, whereby he transferred the council from Baſil to Florence. On the twenty-fifth day of September, the fathers of Baſil, by a formal act, declared this proceeding of the pontiff null and void;*(b)* and on the firſt of October they again ſummoned Eugenius to appear and plead to the charges

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(a) Concil. tom xxx. *p.* 212—217. The orthodoxy of the editor of the acts of the councils has induced him to attach the following marginal obſervation to the decree which thus levelled the thunder of the rebels of Baſil at the ſacred head of the pontiff—" Multa in hac ſynodo ſparſim habentur quæ pon-" tifici et ejus auctoritati derogant, quæ ſunt caute legenda."

(b) Concil. tom. xxx, *p.* 221, 222.

charges which had been exhibited againſt him; and on his failing to appear, either in perſon or by proxy, they pronounced him contumacious, and unanimouſly decreed that he ſhould be proceeded againſt accordingly.*(a)* The pontiff having iſſued a ſecond bull, ſummoning the repreſentatives of the Chriſtian community to Ferrara, for the purpoſe of effecting an union between the Latin and the Greek churches, the council, on the twelfth of October, prohibited all eccleſiaſtics, under pain of excommunication, from yielding obedience to the mandate of their ſpiritual ſovereign.*(b)*

In the proſecution of theſe violent meaſures, the council was encouraged by Alfonſo of Arragon. This prince was highly incenſed againſt Eugenius, who had not only refuſed to beſtow upon him the inveſtiture of the kingdom of Naples, but had ſupported the claim of his competitor, the duke of Anjou, by ſending Vitelleſchi to his aſſiſtance at the head of a conſiderable army. Though the warlike patriarch did not conduct this expedition with his wonted ſucceſs, the pontiff had, by thus imprudently interfering in the affairs of the kingdom of Naples, given great offence to the Arragoneſe monarch, who was naturally impelled to countenance the proceedings of an aſſem-

(a) Ibid. p. 226, et seq.

(b) Ibid. p. 232, et seq.

bly which was labouring to repreſs the power of his adverſary.*(a)*

The intrigues of Alfonſo did not however deter Eugenius from maintaining his ſpiritual authority. On the
Jan. 8th, 1439. eighth day of January, 1438, the council of Ferrara was, according to the tenor of his bull, opened with the cuſtomary ſolemnities.*(b)* When a ſufficient number of eccleſiaſtics were aſsembled to give dignity and authority to the proceedings of this new ſynod, he left Bologna, and repaired in perſon to Ferrara, at which city he ar-
Jan. 27th, 1438. rived on the twenty-ſeventh day of January.*(c)*

The reconciliation of the Latin and Greek churches had, for many centuries, been a ſubject of earneſt deſire, to the zealous advocates for an uniformity of faith amongſt Chriſtians. Whilſt the Greeks poſſeſsed the ſhadow of independence, their acuteneſs in diſputation was by no means inferior to the polemic ability of their antagoniſts, and they ſtrenuouſly perſiſted in maintaining the dogmas in which they differed from the creed of their Latin brethren. But terror frequently produces docility. The emperor John Palæologus II. alarmed by the growing power of the Turks, which threatened his domains with devaſtation

(a) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 169, 170.

(b) *Labbe Concil. tom.* xiii. *p.* 876.

(c) *Muratori Rer. Italic. Script. tom.* iii. *p.* 870.

devaſtation and ruin, was induced to hope, that if he could by a perſonal conference accommodate his religious differences with the repreſentatives of the Latin church, the European powers might be perſuaded to lend him effectual aſsiſtance againſt the hoſtile attacks of the common enemy of the Chriſtian name. When the members of the council of Baſil were apprized of the conciliatory diſpoſition of the Grecian monarch, they immediately iſsued a decree, whereby they engaged to pay the expenses which he ſhould incur on his voyage to Italy, and during his reſidence in that country; and moreover undertook to maintain ſeven hundred perſons of his retinue, including the eccleſiaſtics whom he might ſelect, to participate in their deliberations.*(a)* When Eugenius had determined to hold a counter ſynod at Ferrara, he was well aware that the Greeks would add conſiderable weight to the aſsembly which they ſhould reſolve to countenance by their preſence. He accordingly ſent a ſufficient number of gallies to tranſport Palæologus and his attendants, and, at the ſame time, tranſmitted to the Grecian monarch a conſiderable ſum of money to enable him to make his appearance in Italy with a degree of ſplendor ſuitable to his exalted ſtation. Palæologus, from the prejudices of royalty more diſpoſed to accept the invitation of the ſovereign pontiff than that of an eccleſiaſtical ſenate, embarked in the papal

(a) Concil. tom. xxx. *p.* 189.

Feb. 8th, 1438. gallies, and arrived on the eighth day of February, 1438, at Venice, where he was received with the moſt flattering teſtimonies of reſpect. On the fourth of March enſuing, he made his public entry into Ferrara.*(a)* The ceremonials uſed upon this occaſion were wiſely adapted to flatter the pride of the emperor, and to diſſipate the jealouſy which he might be preſumed to entertain of the pretenſions of the biſhop of Rome. When he arrived at the pontifical reſidence, Eugenius advanced to meet him at the door of his apartment, declined receiving from him any mark of diſtinctive homage, and conducted him to a ſeat on his left hand. The ſame diſcretion was manifeſted in ſettling the arrangements of the council, where the Greek eccleſiaſtics were received with all due honor and reſpect. The proceedings of that aſſembly were by no means rapid. After the firſt ſeſsion, it entered upon no public acts for the ſpace of ſix months. At the end of that time, the plague having made its appearance at Ferrara, and the near approach of the pontiff's inveterate enemy Piccinino, who had taken the cities of Bologna, Imola, and Ravenna,*(b)* exciting the fears of its leading members, Eugenius transferred the orthodox synod to Florence, at which city he

March 4th, 1438.

Jan. 24th, 1439. arrived on the 24th day of January, 1439. His departure from Ferrara was ſo precipitate, that it might juſtly

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(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p,* 173.

(b) Ibid. p. 176, 177.

juſtly be denominated a flight; and in order to avoid the ſoldiers of Piccinino, he was compelled to take a circuitous route by Modena, and through the paſses of the Piſtoian mountains. He was ſoon followed by Palæologus and the deputies of the Greek church, together with the other members of the council.*(a)* Nothing of importance occurred in the deliberations of that aſsembly till the ſixth day of July.*(b)* On this memorable day, the great work of the union of the Latin and Greek churches was in appearance completed, by the aſsent of the Grecian deputies to a decree, whereby the diſputed points, the diſcuſsion of which had for ſo long a ſpace of time excited diſcord between the two grand diviſions of the Chriſtian community, were decided by the concurrence of the higheſt authorities. The points in queſtion were, 1ſt. Whether leavened or unleavened bread ſhould be uſed in the communion of the body of Chriſt. 2d. Whether the ſouls who dwelt in purgatory were purified by elemental fire. 3d. Whether the biſhop of Rome was the ſupreme head of the church, and 4th. Whether the holy ſpirit proceeded from the father and the ſon, or from the father only. On the three firſt of theſe queſtions the Greeks aſsented without any pertinacity of oppoſition to the dogmas of their Latin brethren. The fourth afforded matter of acute and lengthened diſputation, and

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(a) Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. 430.

(b) Labbei Concilia, tom. xiii. *p.* 1164.

and the ſubjugation of the prejudices of the learned eccleſiaſtics of Conſtantinople, called forth not only the polemic ſkill of the moſt irrefragable doctors of the Latin church, but alſo the political talents of the ableſt negociators of the Roman court. Vanquiſhed by intrigue rather than by argument, perſuaded rather than convinced, the attendants of Palæologus, with the exception of two obſtinate theologians, concurred in the decree which announced to the Chriſtian world, that the word *filioque* was legally inſerted in the Nicene creed, that there is a purgatory of fire, and that the body of Chriſt is to be made of unleavened bread.*(a)* This decree having been ſolemnly promulgated, the Greeks quitted Florence on the 26th day of Auguſt, and returned to Conſtantinople.

Auguſt 26th 1439.

Whilſt the council was ſitting at Ferrara, the cauſe of decency and morality was vindicated by the paſſing of a ſolemn cenſure upon a collection of epigrams entitled Hermaphroditus, which was ignominiouſly conſigned to the flames in the moſt public part of the city. The author of this publication, which exceeds the groſſeſt effuſions of heatheniſm in the rankneſs of obſcenity, was Antonio Beccatelli, a native of Palermo, from which circumſtance he is commonly diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of Panormita. Beccatelli was born in the

(a) Labbei Concilia, tom. xiii. *p.* 1165—1168.

the year 1804, of an ancient and honourable family.(a) When he had finiſhed his ſtudies in the univerſity of Pavia, he entered into the ſervice of Filippo Maria, duke of Milan, who ſtudied hiſtory under his inſtructions, for which he liberally requited him, by the payment of an annual ſtipend of eight hundred crowns of gold.(b) Being wearied by the diſtractions occaſioned by the frequent wars which diſturbed the peace of Lombardy, Beccatelli quitted Milan ſome time between the years 1432 and 1436, with the intention of reſiding in his native city. He did not however long continue in retirement; for the fame of his wit and learning having reached Alfonſo, king of Naples, that liberal prince invited him to his court, beſtowed upon him the honourable office of private ſecretary, and treated him with the moſt diſtinguiſhed regard. He continued to occupy ſtations of the higheſt eminence under Alfonſo and his ſucceſsors till the time of his death, which event took place on the 6th of January, 1471.(c)

The Hermaphroditius of Beccatelli, is dedicated to Coſmo de' Medicis. A copy of this work was communicated to Poggio, who was ſo much ſcandalized by its obſcenity, that he wrote to Beccatelli a friendly letter, in

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(a) *Zeno Dissert. Voss. tom.* i. *p.* 307.

(b) *Ibid. p.* 308.

(c) *Ibid. p.* 316.

in which he highly commended the elegance of his ſtyle, but exhorted him to be in future more delicate in the choice of his ſubjects. " I am bound, ſaid he, by the obli- " gation of mutual affection, which is impoſed upon us " all, to admoniſh you to turn your attention to graver " topics."

" The licence which is allowed to youth, may be " pleaded in excuſe of the indelicacy of your late publica- " tion, and you can indeed alledge in your defence the " example of Virgil, and of other writers. But it is " now incumbent upon you to have done with laſcivious- " neſs, and to apply yourſelf to ſeverer ſtudies, leſt your " moral character ſhould be eſtimated by the impurity of " your writings. You know, that we who profeſs our- " ſelves Chriſtians, cannot claim the ſame indulgences " as thoſe who were ignorant of their duty. But I " am in all probability teaching one who is wiſer than " myſelf. I am perſuaded, that on this ſubject you " agree with me in opinion." *(a)*

To this ſalutary admonition Beccatelli replied in a long epiſtle, in which he endeavoured to extenuate his fault, by quoting as precedents, the occaſional pruriencies of compoſition of a long liſt of ancient poets and philoſophers. He alſo attempted to vindicate himſelf by a few

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 349, 350.

few ſophiſtical arguments.*(a)* His reaſoning was eaſily confuted by Poggio, who in a ſecond letter examined with laudable acuteneſs his precedents and arguments, and fully demonſtrated their inſufficiency to vindicate the licentiouſneſs of imagery which diſguſted every modeſt reader, whoſe eyes happened to glance upon the impure pages of the Hermaphroditus.*(b)*

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 350, 351, 352.

(b) Ibid. p. 353, 354, 356. Two manuſcript copies of this work are preſerved in the Laurentian, and a third in the Magliabecchian library at Florence. A fourth is depoſited in the Ambrogian collection at Milan. The author of the preſent volume has been favoured, by a learned friend, with a copy of the Hermaphroditus, which was carefully tranſcribed from the original manuſcripts in the Laurentian library. The diſguſting ribaldry of Beccatelli, fully juſtifies the reproof which he received from Poggio. It is a diſgrace to literature, that his work ſhould have been lately committed to the preſs under the ſuperintendence of a French editor.

The Hermaphroditus was openly condemned, not only by Poggio, but alſo by Filelfo, Laurentius Valla, and by Mariano da Volterra, who inveighed againſt it in a long poem. It was the ſubject of reprobation in the ſermons of Bernardino da Siena, and of Roberto da Lecce, who cauſed it to be burnt in the public ſquares of Bologna and Milan. The zeal of Valla (which, by the way, was kindled as much by perſonal enmity as by a regard to morality) prompted him to hope that the ſame fate awaited its author.

Beſides the Hermaphroditus, Beccatelli publiſhed a variety of works, which are thus enumerated by Apoſtolo Zeno. 1. Alphonſi Regis Triumphus. 2. De Rebus geſtis Ferdinandi Regis. 3. In coronatione Friderici III. Imperatoris Oratio Romæ habita 1452. 4. Ad Alphonſum Siciliæ Regem Oratio. 6. Oratio ad Caetanos de pace. 7. Oratio ad Venetos de pace. 8. Epiſtolarum Libri V. 9. Carmina. 10. Epiſtolæ et Orationes. 11. Epiſ-

Whilſt Eugenius was thus employed in ſubduing the hereſy of the eaſt, he laboured under the high diſpleaſure of the ſynod of Baſil. After a repetition of the various proceſses which had been iſsued againſt him when he at firſt refuſed to acknowledge their authority, the rebellious fathers proceeded on the twenty-fifth of June, 1439, to depoſe him from his pontifical honours. In the act of depoſition which they paſsed againſt him, they impeached him of contumacy and diſobedience to the commands of the church—they declared that he was a violator of the canons, a diſturber of unity, guilty of ſimony and perjury. They furthermore denounced him as an incorrigible ſchiſmatic and heretic, and a deſtroyer of the rights and poſſeſsions of the church.*(a)* On the fifth of November they filled up the meaſure of their offences by electing Amedeus, duke of Savoy, to the pontifical chair.*(b)* Amedeus, wearied by the cares of government, had lately reſigned the ducal ſceptre to his eldeſt ſon, and had withdrawn to the hermitage of Ripaille, a tranquil ſpot delightfully ſituated on the ſouthern ſide of the lake of Geneva, where he purpoſed to dedicate the remainder of his

June 25th, 1439.

Nov. 5th, 1439.

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tolarum & Carminum liber. 12. In Rhodum Poema. 13. Tragediæ. 14. Commentarius in Plautum. 15. Elegiæ. 16. De dictis et factis Alphonſi Regis Libri IV. *Vallæ Invectiva ſecunda in Facium, ſub finem—Zeno Diss. Voss. tom* i. *p.* 315. 316.

(a) Concil. tom. xxx, *p.* 271.

(b) Ibid. p. 298.

his days to devout meditation and prayer. When the intelligence of his election to the pontificate was announced to him, he lamented the ſeverity of his deſtiny, which ſummoned him again to mingle in the cares and temptations of a wicked world: but either ſeduced by the charms of pontifical authority, or regarding the voice of the repreſentatives of the Chriſtian community as the voice of God, he repaired to Baſil, where the ceremony of his coronation was performed with ſtudied magnificence, on the twenty-fourth of July, 1440.*(a)* July 24th, 1440.

In the courſe of this conteſt between the councils of Ferrara and of Baſil, Eugenius derived conſiderable aſſiſtance from the advice and ſupport of Cardinal Julian, who, being at length convinced by experience, of the numerous evils ariſing from the precipitancy of the German ſynod, of the probable occurrence of which he had been forewarned by Poggio, had withdrawn from Baſil, and by timely ſubmiſſion had eaſily made his peace with his offended maſter.*(b)* The converſion of Julian was promoted by the aſſiduous endeavours of Ambrogio Traverſari. Before his acceſſion to the pontifical

(a) In the *Fasciculus Rer. Expet. et Fugiend. tom.* i. *p.* 46—54. There is a very entertaining account drawn up by Æneas Sylvius of the organization and proceedings of the conclave which elected Amedeus to the pontificate, and of the ſplendid proceſſion which took place at the coronation of the Anti-Pope, who aſsumed the name of Felix.

(b) Mehi Vita Ambros. Traver. p. ccccxxvii.

tifical throne, Eugenius had honourably diſtinguiſhed this learned eccleſiaſtic by his friendſhip, and he did not forget him in the hour of his exaltation. The general of the order of Camaldoli, who was impeached of various evil practices, having reſigned his office, Ambrogio was, by the influence of the pontiff, appointed to ſucceed him on the 26th day of October, 1431.*(a)* Inſpired with gratitude for this act of friendſhip, he readily undertook the office of watching over the intereſts of his benefactor at the council of Baſil, which he was deputed to attend, as the repreſentative of the city of Florence.*(b)* In combating the enemies of the pontiff in that ſeditious but enlightened aſſembly, he manifeſted a high degree both of ſpirit and ability. His reſidence at Baſil was however but of ſhort duration. Before the expiration of three months after his arrival in that city, he was diſpatched by Eugenius into Germany, with inſtructions to uſe his utmoſt endeavours to detach the emperor Sigiſmund from the intereſts of the council. Having executed this important commiſsion with more fidelity than ſucceſs, in the ſpring of the year 1436 he returned to Florence, where he ſtrove to forget the intrigues of courts and ſynods in the diſcharge of the duties of his office, and in the reſumption of his ſtudies. In the year 1438, he was again ſummoned from retirement, to engage in the violence of theological diſputation. The pontiff

(a) *Elogi degli uomini illustri Toscani, tom.* i. *p.* cccxlvi.

(b) *Mehi vita Ambrosii Traversarii, p.* ceccv.

pontiff having had ſufficient experience of his ſkill in conducting affairs of the greateſt moment, delegated to him the important office of opening the council of Ferrara.*(a)* In the minute and delicate diſcuſsions of doctrinal points which took place in this aſsembly, he bore a diſtinguiſhed part. On this occaſion, he ſignalized his knowledge of the Greek language, by frequently acting as interpreter between the reſpective repreſentatives of the eaſtern and weſtern churches;*(b)* and it has been aſserted, that his ſkill in intrigue was not leſs conducive than his acuteneſs in diſputation, to the ſettlement of the doctrine of the double proceſsion.*(c)* Ambrogio did not long ſurvive the accompliſhment of this pious work. When the reconciliation of the Greek and Latin churches had been effected, he once more retired to the tranquillity of his monaſtery, where he died on the 20th of November 1439. His remains were firſt depoſited in the abbey of St. Salvadore in Camaldoli, and were afterwards transferred to a religious retreat belonging to his order, ſituated in the diſtrict of Caſentino. The writings of more than one of his contemporaries make mention of a common report, that lilies grew upon his grave in the depth of winter, and that when theſe miraculous flowers were with pious wonder gathered by his ſurviving brethren,

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(a) Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii, p. ccccxxvii.

(b) Ibid. p. ccccxxviii.

(c) Apoſtolo Zeno Diſs. Voſs. tom. i. *p.* 81.

brethren, their place was immediately ſupplied by the production of ſucceſsive harveſts. *(a)* Though the teſtimony of theſe witneſses, may, in an age of ſcepticiſm, be deemed inſufficient to eſtabliſh the belief of this marvellous tale, the circulation of ſuch a report evinces the celebrity of Ambrogio's fame, and the opinion which was generally entertained of the extraordinary ſanctity of his life.

Ambrogio Traverſari is juſtly regarded as one of the literary luminaries of his age. His knowledge was various and profound. He was well verſed in the Hebrew ſcriptures. It has been before obſerved, that the conferences which took place between the deputies of the Latin and Greek churches in the council of Ferrara, gave him an opportunity of diſplaying the uncommon proficiency which he had made in the Grecian language. Rendering his literary acquirements ſubſervient to the duties of his profeſsion, he dedicated a conſiderable portion of his time to the tranſlation of the Greek fathers. Diogenes Laertius is

(a) *Mehi Vita Ambroſii Traverſarii*, *p.* ccccxxxii. The author of the life of Ambrogio, in the *Elogi degli uomini illustri Toscani*, mentions this report in the following terms. " Non manca chi creda, che Iddio a interceſsione di Am-
" brogio faceſse ancor dei prodigi. E certamente, l'eſser dopo la di lui morte,
" nati ſpontaneamente gigli ed altri fiori ſopra il ſuo cadavere, che colti dai
" Religioſi inſtantaneamente riforivano per tutto il luogo occupato dalla vene-
" rabile di lui ſpoglia, ſembra coſa più che naturale. Epure di ciò fanno fede
" perſone che hanno potuto vedere ocularmente un tal prodigio al ſacro Eremo
" di Camaldoli." *p.* cccxlviii, cccxlix.

is the only profane author whoſe works he illuſtrated by a Latin verſion. His ſtyle is flowing, but ſo unpoliſhed, that he ſeems to have fallen into the erroneous opinion, that an attention to the elegancies of compoſition is unbecoming thoſe who are dedicated to ſacred offices. His manners appear to have been ſimple, and his diſpoſitions benevolent. With his learned contemporaries he maintained an extenſive correſpondence. A large collection of his letters was publiſhed by P. Martene in the third volume of his Ancient Monuments. This collection was afterwards re-publiſhed with ſeveral additions, by P. Canetti; and laſtly the Abate Mehus, in two ſplendid folio volumes, printed at Florence in the year 1759, has favoured the public with a very correct impreſſion of Ambrogio's epiſtles and orations, to which he has prefixed a moſt elaborate hiſtory of his life, and of the revival of literature in Florence. Theſe epiſtles, and the Hodœporicon, or journal kept by Traverſari, of the obſervations which he made in the courſe of ſeveral journies which he took to various parts of Italy, after his elevation to the generalſhip of his order, afford much curious information concerning the manners and cuſtoms of the times in which he lived.

With Poggio, Ambrogio maintained the moſt familiar intimacy. The friendſhip of theſe induſtrious revivers of literature, originated in the community of their ſtudies, and was confirmed by mutual acts of good will. But the jealouſy with which Poggio regarded the whole body of monks,

monks, led him to ſuſpect that Ambrogio, after his advancement to the generalſhip of his order, diveſted himſelf of that ſimplicity and ſingleneſs of heart, which may be reaſonably expected from thoſe who make a profeſsion of extraordinary ſanctity, and that he diſguiſed the ſelfiſhneſs of ambition in the garb of pretended humility.*(a)* This ſuſpicion however he advanced with becoming doubt; and perhaps juſtice to Ambrogio might trace its origin to that ſuperior gravity which he might think it incumbent upon himſelf to aſsume, when he was called to fill offices of high dignity, and which might ſometimes reſtrain that familiarity with which he was accuſtomed to converſe with Poggio and his other friends, when he dwelt in cloiſtered ſecluſion, a ſimple monk of Camaldoli.

Whilſt Ambrogio was employed at Ferrara in the correction of creeds, and the converſion of heretics, Poggio was occupied by domeſtic cares in the retirement of his
A. D. 1438. Tuſcan villa. In the year 1438, his wife preſented him with a ſon, to whom he gave the name of Pietro Paulo. Amongſt the number of his friends who congratulated him on this event, was Cincio, one of the apoſtolic ſecretaries, a deſcendant of the noble Roman family of Ruſtica.*(b)* Monſieur

(a) See Poggio's dialogue on Hypocriſy in the *Fasciculus Rer. Expet. et fugiend. tom* ii. *p.* 583.

(b) Recanati Osservazioni, p. 19.

Monſieur L' Enfant has publiſhed the letter which Cincio wrote on this occaſion, wherein he intimates to Poggio his firm perſuaſion, that this child, being the offspring of a man of conſummate learning, and of a mother deſcended from an honourable family, would be naturally inclined to every thing excellent and praiſe-worthy. In the proſpect of his being educated at Florence alſo he finds a preſage of his future attainments in knowledge and in virtue. Anxious for the welfare of an infant born under ſuch happy auſpices, he admoniſhes his friend, that ſhould any conſideration induce him to prohibit Vaggia from performing the firſt duty of a mother, it would be incumbent upon him to be faſtidiouſly careful in the choice of a nurſe. "Let her be," ſays he, "a woman of a robuſt "conſtitution, of good complexion, as well as of a good "diſpoſition, and alſo of ingenuous manners; for nurſes "have a wonderful influence in forming the habits of chil-"dren." He then exhorts Poggio aſsiduouſly to watch over the progreſs of his ſon's underſtanding, and to inculcate upon him leſsons of the ſtricteſt temperance. After having enlarged upon theſe topics, he concludes in the following terms:—"Laſtly, I muſt inform you, that your "preſence is very earneſtly deſired in the Roman court. "Come then, and we will celebrate the birth of your ſon "in a friendly feſtival. You ſhall be the maſter of the "feaſt, and you ſhall have the honour of entertaining as "your gueſts, a number of Latin and Greek philoſophers. "We will converſe upon a variety of topics, particular-"ly upon the nature of pleaſure. The exquiſiteneſs of

" the diſhes, and the excellence of the wine, will enſure " the alluring goddeſs abundance of advocates. Even I, " who have juſt been vilifying her, as not to be tole- " rated in human ſociety, may poſsibly on this occaſion " once more enter into her good graces." *(a)*

During the time when the domeſtic concerns of Poggio cauſed him to be abſent from the pontifical court, the liſt of his correſpondents was enlarged by the name of a ſovereign prince, who occupied the foremoſt rank amongſt the potentates of Italy, namely Filippo Maria, duke of Milan. This reſtleſs chieftain had in the year 1436, renewed hoſtilities againſt the Florentines, in contempt of the pacification which had been concluded at Ferrara, only three years before that period. This war was not however of long duration. The Florentines being diſsatisfied with the conduct of the Venetians their allies, concluded a ſeparate peace with the duke on very advantageous terms, in the year 1438.

The alliance between the Florentines and the Venetians had always been a moſt formidable obſtacle to the ambitious projects of Filippo, and he had nothing more at heart than to create a jealouſy between thoſe two republics. It was probably with a view of engaging the party of the Medici in his intereſt, that ſoon after the concluſion of the abovementioned peace, he addreſsed to Poggio a long

(a) Poggiana, tom. ii. *p.* 322—326.

long epiſtle, in which he artfully attempted to gratify his well known enthuſiaſtic love of his native country, by a ſtudied eulogium on the Florentine ſtate, and alſo endeavoured to conciliate his favour by aſsuring him, that he had always entertained the higheſt reſpect for his perſonal qualities, and his literary attainments. It appears from the commencement of Filippo's letter, that ſome perſons having ſtigmatized the Florentines as a ſhort ſighted people, Poggio had remarked that the duke of Milan was well qualified to prove the contrary.*(a)* The duke, affecting not to be ſenſible of the ſarcaſm couched in this obſervation, profeſsed to be greatly flattered by the high opinion which Poggio appeared to entertain of his talents; and commending the zeal which he manifeſted in defending the reputation of his country, declared, that ſo far from finding the Florentines ſhort-ſighted, he had always witneſsed their ſkill, their prudence, and their ſagacity. The valour of the Tuſcans, he obſerved, his anceſtors had experienced to their coſt. Nor was he himſelf inſenſible of the power of their arms, or of the wiſdom of their coun-

 cils.

(a) The ſhortſightedneſs of the Florentines ſeems to have been a ſubject of proverbial ſarcaſm to their neighbours. "Bartolomeo Soccini of Siena," ſays Mr. Roſcoe, in his life of Lorenzo de' Medicis, "having obſerved, in alluſion to "the defect in Lorenzo's ſight, that the air of Florence was injurious to the "eyes, *true*, ſaid Lorenzo, *and that of Siena to the brain.*" When Leo X. was elected to the pontificate, the Roman wits thus interpreted a certain date of the year MCCCCXL, which was inſcribed on a tablet in the church of the Vatican—Multi cæci cardinales creaverunt cæcum decimum Leonem.

Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medicis, vol. ii. *p.* 119.—*Fabroni Vita Leonis. X.*

cils. In the late war they had ſo ſkilfully and courageouſly fruſtrated his hoſtile attempts, that they had proved themſelves truly worthy of the bleſsing of freedom. Nor were the Florentines leſs accompliſhed in the arts of peace than in thoſe of war. Their moderation was univerſally acknowledged. By their patronage of the liberal ſciences, they had acquired an honourable diſtinction amongſt the ſtates of Italy. A people of this character, Filippo obſerved, he could not but eſteem and love, and he proteſted, that he would henceforth be as aſsiduous in cultivating their friendſhip, as he had lately been active in troubling their repoſe. He adviſed Poggio to treat the malevolent ſpeeches of calumniators with contempt; and at the cloſe of his epiſtle, he aſsured him that he would always be ready to exert his power and abilities to promote the welfare of the Tuſcan republic.

In his anſwer to this extraordinary letter, Poggio expreſsed the grateful ſenſe which he entertained of the polite condeſcenſion manifeſted by the duke, in thus honouring a private and obſcure individual with his unſolicited correſpondence. He aſsured Filippo that he was highly gratified by the flattering terms in which he had complimented him on his literary attainments, but yet more by the eulogium which he had pronounced upon the city of Florence, and by the pledge which he had given of his friendſhip for the Tuſcan ſtate. He then expreſsed his hope, and indeed his confidence, that the pacific profeſsions of the duke would not be found fallacious,

cious, but that his actions would prove the ſincerity of his declarations. Proceeding to remind him of different conjunctures in which the Florentines had teſtified their good will towards him, he obſerved to his illuſtrious correſpondent, that whenever the adminiſtrators of the Tuſcan republic had engaged in hoſtilities againſt him, they had not been prompted to take up arms by the ambitious hope of extending their territories; but by a determination to defend their liberties. "And if," ſaid he, "liberty ought to be dear to any people, it ought to be "dear to the Florentines; for freedom is the very eſence "of our conſtitution. We are not ruled by the arbitrary will of an individual, nor by a faction of nobles. "The maſs of the people enjoy an equality of rights, and "the way to civic honours is open to all. Hence it happens, that the high and the low, the noble and the "ignoble, the rich and the poor, unite in the defence of "their common freedom, and that in ſo glorious a cauſe, "they ſpare no expenſe, ſhrink from no labour, and "dread no danger." Poggio then proceeded to expreſs his perſuaſion, that in the wars in which the duke had engaged againſt the Florentine ſtate, he had imagined that he was fighting in defence of his honour and glory; for it was not to be ſuppoſed, that ſo generous a prince could for a moment entertain the unworthy deſire to oppreſs a republic, whoſe power and ſplendor, the conſequences of its free conſtitution, were the pride of Italy. Nothing, he aſsured the duke, could be more grateful to his feelings, than the friendly diſpoſitions towards

wards his countrymen announced in his letter, which he fondly regarded as the herald of a lasting peace. "Peace, said he, "I must always regard as preferable to war— "provided it be not the cloak of insidious stratagem. "You see," continued Poggio, "that your condescen- "sion encourages me to express my sentiments with the "utmost freedom. At the same time do not imagine "that I mean to insinuate any doubt of your sincerity. "I am confident that your well known wisdom will "prompt you to lay the foundations of a firm and lasting "friendship, which will be mutually advantageous to "yourself and the Florentine state. Let this be your "conduct, and you will find me a joyful herald of your "praise; and inconsiderable as my talents may be, my "efforts will be the means of exciting others, whose a- "bilities will do ample justice to your merits." *(a)*

If it was the intention of the duke of Milan, by thus honouring Poggio with the offer of his friendship, to make an experiment upon his vanity, the tenor of the foregoing answer to his condescending epistle, must have convinced him that this experiment had entirely failed. Divesting himself of the humility of the papal secretary, Poggio addressed his illustrious correspondent with the firm ingenuousness of a citizen of a free state. He pleaded the cause of his country with all the energy of liberty; and though he prudently smoothed the harshness of dis- trust

(a) Poggii Opera p. 333—339.

truſt by the poliſh of urbanity, the penetration of Filippo would eaſily diſcern, that he was far from giving implicit credit to his profeſsions of friendſhip for the Florentine republic.

Whatever might be the views of the duke in this affair, not many months had elapſed after the occurrence of this interchange of ſuſpicious civility, before he found that the privileged walls of the palace of Milan could not protect a literary delinquent from the rage of ſcholaſtic vengeance; and that the interpoſition of his patronage could not deter Poggio from reiterating his attacks upon Franceſco Filelfo. It has been already related, that this wandering profeſsor, when he was compelled to fly from Florence, withdrew to Siena, where he arrived early in the year 1435. In this city he commenced a ſeries of lectures on rhetoric, for which he was remunerated by the payment of an annual ſalary of three hundred and fifty gold crowns.*(a)* His literary labours were however diſturbed by the apprehenſions which he entertained of the machinations of his adverſaries. But his fears for his perſonal ſafety did not reſtrain the intemperance of his pen. On the thirteenth of Auguſt, 1437, he tranſmitted to one of his friends named Pietro Pierleoni, a new ſatire againſt Poggio and Coſmo de'Medicis. Soon after the publication of this ſatire, he viſited the baths of Petriolæ, where he had not long reſided before he received a letter from Siena, informing

(a) Philelfi Opera, p. 13.

forming him that a man of a very ſuſpicious appearance had been making minute inquiries into his preſent ſituation and habits of life. On the receipt of this letter Filelfo returned to Siena, where he ſoon recognized in the perſon in queſtion, the ruffian who had formerly made an attack upon him in the ſtreets of Florence. He immediately gave the neceſsary information to the captain of the city guard. This officer without loſs of time apprehended the villain, from whom, according to the barbarous practices of the times, he endeavoured to extract a declaration of the object of his viſit to Siena by the pains of the rack. By this uncertain mode of inveſtigation, the priſoner was compelled to confeſs, that he came to that city for the purpoſe of aſsaſsinating Filelfo. The captain of the guard did not deem it neceſsary to inquire whether any perſon had ſuborned him to perpetrate ſo execrable a deed; but the ready conjecture of Filelfo, fixed upon the Medicis an imputation, which a direct interrogatory ably introduced on a new diſtenſion of his ſinews, would have induced the wretched Filippo to confirm by a judicial declaration. An acknowledgment of guilt having been thus extorted from the culprit, the captain of the guard proceeded to condemn him to pay a fine of five hundred pounds of ſilver. Filelfo, not ſatisfied with this penalty, appealed to the governor of the city, who proceeding upon the recorded confeſsion, puniſhed the offender by cutting off his right hand. Nothing indeed but the earneſt requeſt of Filelfo, would have prevented the chief magiſtrate from dooming the wretch to the puniſhment

of

of death. Filelfo was not however prompted by any emotions of compaſsion to deſire that the life of the aſsaſsin might be prolonged. "I interfered to prevent his execution," ſaid he, in a letter to Æneas Sylvius, "because I wiſhed that he ſhould live mutilated and diſgraced, rather than that he ſhould be freed by a ſpeedy death from the anguiſh of a ſuffering mind. For as it is the duty of a man of a magnanimous ſpirit, to forgive ſlight offences, ſo juſtice and prudence require us to inflict vengeance on a common enemy of the human race." *(a)* Filelfo was ſo much alarmed by the appearance of the Tuſcan bravo, that he did not deem himſelf ſecure in the precincts of Siena. He accordingly returned from thence to Bologna. *(b)* After a ſhort reſidence in that place, in the month of May 1439, he repaired to Milan, to which city he was attracted by the munificence of the duke. *(c)* Encouraged by the protection of this powerful patron, he exulted in his ſecurity, and proudly bid defiance to his enemies. Miſtaking the emotions of wrath for the inſpiration of the muſe, he poured forth torrent after torrent of abuſive verſes. Ringing over and over again the changes of virulent ſcurrility, he renewed his

(a) *Philelfi Epiſtolæ, p.* 18.

(b) *Ibid.*

(c) *Ibid.*

his attack upon the perſon and reputation of Poggio. The vengeance of Poggio was not long dormant. He moved to the combat with the cumbrous artillery of a long invective, in which he continued his invidious ſtrictures on the life and converſation of his adverſary. Adverting in the beginning of this compoſition to the ſcandalous imputations which had been aimed at him by Filelfo, he thus compared his own hiſtory with that of his antagoniſt. "Of myſelf I ſhall only ſay, that in "conſequence of theſe crimes which you impute to me, "I have lived with honour and dignity in the ſervice of "ſeven ſucceſſive pontiffs, from whom I have expe- "rienced the moſt ſatisfactory proofs of their kind regard; "whilſt you, adorned as you repreſent yourſelf to be with "virtues, have been wandering about like a Scythian "flying from city to city; oppreſſed with poverty, conti- "nually reduced to the neceſſity of ſuing for foreign aid, "never able to retain a fixed habitation for any length of "time; but like a harpy, ſpreading ſuch a foul contagion "wherever you come, that they who afforded you an "aſylum, were ſoon compelled to baniſh you." (a) Upbraiding his antagoniſt with the obſcurity of his origin, Poggio affirmed that he was the offſpring of an adulterous intercourſe between a pariſh prieſt and the wife of a ruſtic, whoſe hands he ſaid were ſo rough with continual labour, that he was accuſtomed to uſe them inſtead

(a) *Poggii Opera, p. 175.*

inſtead of a curry-comb in dreſſing his horſes. (a) Tracing the courſe of Filelfo's early life, he noticed his reſidence in Padua, and his viſit to Venice and Conſtantinople, from all which places he affirmed that he was driven by the infamy of his vices. Narrating his tranſactions after his return to Italy, he charged him with fraudulently retaining certain books, in payment for which he had received ſums of money from Lionardo Giuſtiniano and Guarino Veroneſe. He alſo enumerated many more inſtances of his alledged diſhoneſty. Amongſt other imputations of this nature, he aſſerted, that Filelfo, being once admitted into Leonardo Aretino's library, took advantage of the abſence of his hoſt to ſteal a box of gold rings. He reminded him of the precipitancy of his flight from Florence, and affirmed that he left Siena in diſgrace, and fled to Milan in circumſtances of the utmoſt diſtreſs. Having exhauſted all the topics of obloquy which ſuggeſted themſelves to his fertile imagination, Poggio concluded his invective with the following peroration. "Since you are conſcious that theſe things are true, I "wonder that you do not withdraw from the light, and "fly from the aſpect of men into ſome diſtant ſolitudes, "where the villainy of Filelfo is unknown. But your "mind, delighting in wickedneſs and blinded by paſſion, "your obſcene manners, your abandoned life, your ſe"cret vices, hurry you headlong to your fate, drive you "onward by the inſtigation of the furies, prevent you

(a) *Poggii Opera, p. 176.*

"from profiting by wholeſome counſel, and render you "inſenſible of the diſtinction between right and wrong. "Are you not aware, madman! (but who can expect to "find any degree of knowledge in one who is abandoned "to wickedneſs) are you not aware, I ſay, in what "contempt your ſcandalous writings are held by the "learned? You muſt be content with the approbation of "your ſcholars, in the midſt of whom, impudent aſs as "you are, you vapour like another Ariſtarchus. As for "myſelf, I had much rather be vilified than commended "by ſuch a baſe buffoon as you are. For as no genuine "praiſe can proceed from a man of a blaſted reputation, "ſo the obloquy of ſuch a character affixes no ſtain. As "Hercules traverſed the world to benefit mankind by his "labours, ſo you have viſited every country and climate "to diſguſt them by your vices. Whither would you "betake yourſelf ſhould you be deprived of the counte- "nance of your preſent patron? You have now wander- "ed like a common mendicant through every diſtrict of "Italy. What will you do if your preſent reſources fail "you? Whoſe aſſiſtance will you implore? To whoſe "protection will you commend yourſelf? I know what "you will do. You will enliſt into ſome army; and, "ſuch is your ambition, you will have the vanity "to aſpire to the chief command. But you will make "your exit at the gallows—an exit well befitting a man "of your vicious character. For when your patron "ſhall perceive that he does not obtain praiſe, but igno- "miny from your ridiculous writings, his ſentiments will

"be

"be changed, and he will drag you from your obſcene "retreat, and inflict upon you the puniſhment due to "your crimes." *(a)*

The exhibition of a few ſpecimens of the virulence which diſtinguiſhed the hoſtility of theſe learned gladiators, is neceſsary to give a true idea of the character of the combatants, and of the times in which they lived. It may alſo be ſubſervient to another uſeful purpoſe. The odious nature of vice, as well as the beauty of virtue, is moſt ſtrikingly demonſtrated by examples; and perhaps nothing will tend more to convince men of the folly of evil ſpeaking, lying and ſlandering, than the peruſal of the invectives of Poggio, and the ſatires of Filelfo.

Poggio did not, however, waſte the whole of the leiſure time which he enjoyed in the retirement of his Tuſcan villa, in the diſgraceful occupation of beſtowing a literary garb on the groſseſt abuſe. At the commencement of the year 1440, he publiſhed his dialogue on nobility, a work which greatly increaſed his reputation by the luminouſneſs of its method, the elegance of its diction, and the learned references with which it was interſperſed. In a ſhort prefatory addreſs, by which he dedicated this dialogue to Gerardo Landriani, biſhop of Como, he obſerved, that it was a remarkable circumſtance, that this ſubject which opened ſo wide a field for diſcuſsion, A. D. 1440.

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 186, 187.

diffuſion, had been in a manner neglected by the learned. He profeſſed his conviction of his own inability to do juſtice to it, but expreſſed his hopes that his example might induce ſcholars of more brilliant talents to correct his errors, and ſupply his deficiencies.

The interlocutors of this dialogue are Niccolo Niccoli, and Lorenzo de' Medicis, the brother of Coſmo. The ſcene of the converſation is laid in the villa of Poggio, which theſe lovers of the fine arts had viſited for the purpoſe of inſpecting ſome ancient ſtatues which had been lately conveyed thither from Rome. The ſight of theſe ſtatues arranged in the garden of Poggio's rural retreat, reminds Lorenzo of the manners of the ancient Romans, who, he obſerves, were accuſtomed to adorn the halls of their palaces with the effigies of their anceſtors, the luſtre of whoſe nobility they imagined reflected honour on themſelves. This remark draws from Niccolo a declaration of his opinion, that in founding their fame on the glory of their progenitors, they were greatly deceived, as the ſeat of true nobility is the mind. Lorenzo, granting the poſition, that virtue is a ſource of nobility, affirms that this honour may alſo be acquired by the ornaments of wealth and dignity. In proof of his aſſertion he enlarges on the meaning of the word *nobilis*, ſhewing by various quotations from Latin authors, that it is uſed to ſignify in general the quality of being remarkable, without any reference to the cauſe of notoriety. He moreover obſerves that the common opinion of men, attaches the idea

idea of nobility to eminence of ſtation, ſplendour of birth, and other adventitious circumſtances of a ſimilar nature. Nicole replying to this obſervation, that if the opinion of the vulgar is to be regarded, their ideas are ſo various upon the ſubject, that no certain criterion can be derived from them, is deſired to enumerate the characteriſtics of nobility, which occur in different countries. In compliance with this request, he thus deſcribes the nobles of his native land. "To begin with the Italians, who have diſſemi-"nated amongſt other nations the arts which adorn "human life, what a difference there ſubſiſts between the "nobility of Naples, of Venice, and of Rome. The "Neapolitans who pride themſelves on their patrician "dignity, ſeem to imagine that nobility conſiſts in the "indulgence of idleneſs and ſloth; for they enter into no "active purſuits, but live in indolence upon the revenues "of their eſtates. They deem it unbecoming a noble-"man to attend to agriculture, or to take any cognizance "of the ſtate of his affairs. They ſpend their time in "loitering in the halls of their palaces, or in equeſtrian "exerciſes. However bad a man's moral character may "be, or however mean his talents, if he be deſcended "from an ancient family, he ranks amongſt the nobility. "As to merchandize, they regard it with contempt; and "ſo ridiculous is their pride, that though they be reduced "to the moſt abject ſtate of poverty, they would rather "ſtarve than ſuffer any branch of their family to form a "matrimonial alliance with the moſt opulent tradeſman: "Nay, ſo great is their diſlike of traffic, that they deem it

"more

"more honourable to support themselves by robbery,
"than to gain a livelihood by engaging in any species of
"commerce. I know a Neapolitan of a most illustrious
"family, who was regarded by his brother patricians
"in so degrading a light, because he had exposed to sale
"a quantity of wine, the produce of his estates, that he
"experienced the utmost difficulty in marrying his daugh-
"ter, though he was able to bestow upon her a very
"large fortune."

"To this absurdity the customs of the Venetians af-
"ford a striking contrast. In their state the nobility
"compose a kind of faction distinct from the body of
"the people, and are all engaged in merchandize. All
"those who have discharged public offices, and all the
"members of the senate are graced with the honours of
"nobility. And so vain are they of this distinction, that
"the foolish and needy son of a foolish and needy father,
"looks down with disdain upon a plebeian whatever may
"be his learning or his worth. The Venetian nobility
"is sometimes recruited in an extraordinary manner.
"For he who has done any signal service to the state,
"however culpable may have been the means of which
"he has made use to promote this end, is immediately
"enrolled in the list of the patricians."

"The Roman nobles are taught to regard merchan-
"dize as a sordid pursuit, and they employ themselves
"in the cultivation of their lands, and in the breeding

"of

" of cattle. So far are they from thinking it beneath " their dignity to convert their agricultural knowledge " into a ſource of gain, that property thus acquired will " raiſe ignoble families to the honours of noble birth."

" The Florentines ſeem to have more correct no- " tions of nobility than any of the above-mentioned " communities. For amongſt us thoſe are accounted " noble who are deſcended from ancient families, and " whoſe anceſtors have held diſtinguiſhed places in the " adminiſtration of public affairs; but their nobility is " by no means dependent upon the nature of their oc- " cupation. For ſome of them engage in merchandize; " others live upon the income of their property, and " amuſe themſelves with the rural diverſions of hawking " and hunting. The Genoeſe who live on the coaſt are " all indiſcriminately engaged in commerce, and their " nobility depends upon their origin. The Lombard " nobles reſide in fortreſſes built upon the mountains, " and, by their predatory excurſions, ſtrike terror into " the traveller. The nobility of the terra firma of Ve- " nice, live on the revenue of their eſtate, and ſpend " their time in rural ſports. Amongſt them, nobility " depends upon high deſcent, and independence of pro- " perty. Why ſhould I mention other nations whoſe " cuſtoms differ but little from our own? The Germans " eſteem thoſe noble who inherit a patrimony ſufficient " for their maintenance, and they beſtow this title on " thoſe formidable plunderers who retire from towns

" and cities to the ſecurity of their caſtles. Throughout " the whole of France the privilege of nobility is held " by one uniform tenure. The Gallic lords live in the " country, and think it a diſgrace for a man of exalted " birth to reſide in a town. They deſpiſe merchants " as a vile and abject race of beings. Prodigality and " careleſsneſs with regard to futurity they eſteem a cer- " tain indication of a noble ſpirit. The nobility of " France is continually increaſed by the acceſsion either " of the wealthy, or of the retainers of the great ba- " rons. For the ſons of merchants and tradeſmen who " have inherited large fortunes from their fathers, by " purchaſing an eſtate, and living in the country on its " produce, compoſe an inferior order of nobility, and " tranſmit to their ſons all the honours of the ariſtocracy: " and thoſe who have lived in the ſervice of the great " barons, by receiving from their liege lords a grant of " land, attain to the rank of nobility. The cuſtoms of " the Engliſh are in this reſpect very ſimilar to thoſe of " the French. In Spain, nobility is attached to the de- " ſcendants of ancient houſes, who are poſſeſſed of com- " petent property, whether they reſide in cities or in " the country."

Having thus noticed the different ideas of nobility, which are entertained in the European ſtates, Niccolo proceeds ſlightly to animadvert upon the notions of the Aſiatics upon this ſubject; and from this induction of particulars, he draws the general inference, that nobility in

in the vulgar acceptation of the term, cannot be traced to any fixed principles. On Lorenzo's intimating that the title of noble ſhould be granted to all thoſe who are eſteemed ſo by the inſtitutions of their country, Niccolo refuſes his aſsent to this propoſition, and proceeds to argue the matter at large with much ſound reaſoning, proving that nobility does not depend upon externals. Lorenzo in reply to Niccolo adduces the definition of nobility propoſed by Ariſtotle, who aſserts in his treatiſe on Politics, that the virtuous deſcendants of virtuous and wealthy anceſtors are noble. This definition is examined by Niccolo, who maintains that it is faulty, becauſe a virtuous man does not loſe his nobility, ſhould he happen to be deprived of his wealth. In oppoſition to the opinion of the Stagyrite, he quotes the opinion of Plato and the Stoics, who aſsert that true nobility conſiſts in virtue. Lorenzo acknowledges that virtue is requiſite to true nobility; but ſtill contends that to complete the idea of this diſtinction, to virtue muſt be added thoſe external advantages which render a man conſpicuous. Niccolo grants that theſe are deſirable adjuncts; but at the ſame time adheres to his original poſition, that purity of moral principle is an indiſpenſable characteriſtic of genuine nobility, and concludes the conference by inviting the company to enjoy the coolneſs of the evening in walking along the banks of the river.(a)

(a) *Poggii Opera, p.* 64—83.

Though this dialogue on nobility was received with great applauſe by the generality of learned men, the deſcription which it contained of the Venetian nobles, offended the patriotic pride of Gregorio Coriario, prothonotary of the apoſtolic ſee, who remonſtrated with Poggio on the unfavourable light in which he had repreſented the patricians of his country as a kind of faction diſtinct from the body of the people, and as being ready to confer the higheſt civil honours on thoſe who had ſerved their country, even by diſhonourable means. In reply to the animadverſions of Gregorio, Poggio expreſsed his wiſh, that he had communicated his dialogue to him previouſly to its publication, declaring that he would with the utmoſt readineſs have altered or expunged any objectionable paſsage which might have been pointed out to him. At the ſame time he endeavoured to palliate the offence which he had committed againſt the dignity of the Venetian ariſtocracy, by obſerving that he had adopted the word *factio* merely to expreſs the idea of a claſs or party of men, in which innocent or indifferent ſenſe, it was uſed by the beſt Latin authors. As to the ſecond cauſe of diſpleaſure, he proteſted that he had made the obnoxious aſsertion in queſtion, upon what he conceived to be good authority, and that he was perſuaded that the Venetians had ſometimes conferred the honours of nobility upon men of equivocal character. "You aſk me," continued he "to quote ſome "inſtance of the occurrence of this circumſtance. Be- "lieve me, if I recollected any I would rather acknow- "ledge myſelf in an error, than defend my cauſe at the "expenſe

" expenſe of any one's good name. I wiſh my lucubra-
" tions to be favourably received by the public. On this
" account it is much more my intereſt to praiſe than to
" condemn. I therefore beg that you will freely correct
" my miſtakes, and do not fear exciting my diſpleaſure.
" I eſteem myſelf greatly indebted to you for that kindneſs
" which prompts you to be watchful over my honour,
" and zealous to prevent me from giving unneceſſary
" offence. Nor muſt I forget to expreſs the ſenſe which
" I feel of the modeſty and urbanity which render your
" letter the clear expreſsion of the mildneſs and gentle-
" neſs of your manners. *Florence, April* 8, 1440." *(a)* April 8th, 1440.

By introducing Lorenzo de' Medicis as an interlocutor in this dialogue, Poggio no doubt intended to preſerve to diſtant times, the memory of the familiar terms on which he had lived with one of the moſt illuſtrious citizens of Florence.

Lorenzo did not long ſurvive the publication of this teſtimony of eſteem. On the twenty-third of September 1440, he paid the great debt of nature. In him Poggio was at once deprived of a father, a brother, and a friend, of one who was always ready to ſympathize in his cares, and to aſsiſt him in his diſtreſses. *(b)* Whilſt Lorenzo lived Sept. 23d. 1440.

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 225—328.

(b) Poggii Opera, p. 278.

lived, he was free from anxiety with regard to pecuniary affairs, as in his liberality he conſtantly found the moſt copious reſources in the hour of need. By the death of this generous benefactor, he was deeply affected; and as ſoon as his grief would permit him to collect his ſcattered thoughts, he haſtened to celebrate the virtues of his deceaſed friend, in an eulogium on his character, which he addreſsed to Carlo Aretino. From this effuſion of affectionate eſteem, we learn that Lorenzo was endued with the elegance of taſte, the liberality of ſpirit, and the urbanity of manners, which for ſo long a period diſtinguiſhed all the branches of his renowned family. His kinſmen no doubt deemed his memory highly honoured by the reſpectful attendance of Eugenius IV, at his funeral obſequies.(a) But they were probably little aware, that the fluteous zeal of an humble ſecretary, would be more conducive to the diffuſion and the permanence of his fame, than the ſplendour of a pontifical proceſsion, or the grandeur of monumental memorials.

(a) *Poggii Opera, p. 285.*

CHAP. IX.

WAR between the Florentines and the duke of Milan —Treachery and death of Vitelleſchi—The duke of Milan makes peace with the Florentines—Death of Niccolo d' Eſte—Character of his ſucceſſor Lionello—Correſpondence between Lionello and Poggio—Remarks on the price of books—Eugenius endeavours to drive Sforza from the Marca d' Ancona—He quits Florence—Death of Nicolao Albergato, cardinal of Santa Croce—Poggio's funeral eulogium on the cardinal—Memoirs of Tommaſo da Sarzana—Poggio dedicates to Tommaſo his dialogue on the Unhappineſs of princes—Analyſis of that dialogue—Death of Leonardo Aretino—Funeral honours paid to Leonardo—Gianozzo Manetti's oration on that occaſion—Poggio's eulogium on Leonardo—Character of Leonardo—Account of Leonardo's ſucceſſor, Carlo Marſuppini—Death of cardinal Julian—Poggio's eulogium on the cardinal.

CHAP. IX.

IT has been already obſerved, that from the tenor of Poggio's anſwer to the complimentary letter of the duke of Milan, he appears not to have given implicit credit to that prince's profeſsions of friendſhip for the Florentine republic, and that he evidently expected that the reſtleſs ambition of Filippo would again kindle the flames of war. Events juſtified his prognoſtications. In the year 1439, the adminiſtrators of the Tuſcan government were ſo much alarmed by the ſucceſs of Piccinino, who had invaded the Venetian territories at the head of the Milaneſe army, that they renewed their alliance with their ancient friends, to whoſe aſsiſtance they ſent a conſiderable body of troops, under the command of Franceſco Sforza. The duke of Milan, with the view of compelling the Tuſcans to withdraw their forces from Lombardy, directed Piccinino to make an incurſion into the

territories of Florence. Piccinino accordingly marched through Romagna, and made himſelf maſter of ſeveral places in the diſtrict of Caſentino. The duke of Milan expected to have derived conſiderable aſsiſtance in the invaſion of the Tuſcan territories from Vitelleschi, with whom he had for ſome time carried on a ſecret correſpondence, and who had through hatred of the Florentines, engaged to ſupport Piccinino with a powerful body of troops. But the ſecrecy with which this intrigue had been conducted, did not elude the vigilance of the adminiſtrators of the Tuſcan government. They fortunately intercepted certain letters addreſsed by the duke to Vitelleſchi, which revealed the particulars of the conſpiracy. Theſe letters they communicated to the pontiff, who gave immediate orders for the arreſt of the perfidious patriarch. As Vitelleſchi was then at Rome, the execution of this commiſsion was entruſted to Antonio Ridio, the commandant of the caſtle of St. Angelo. According to the inſtructions of Eugenius, Vitelleſchi was ſuddenly ſurrounded by a troop of horſe, as he was paſsing the bridge of St. Angelo, on his way to join the forces which he had deſtined for the aſsiſtance of Piccinino. He was no ſooner aware of his danger, than he boldly drew his ſword and endeavoured to cut his way through the ſoldiers, who were ſent to ſecure him. In the conflict he was wounded in the neck, and growing faint with loſs of blood, he was overpowered and carried as a priſoner into the caſtle. On the twentieth day of his confinement he died, as ſome ſay of his wounds, according

according to the report of others of poison. By whatever means he came to his end, ſo atrocious were the cruelties which he had committed during the days of his power, that his death occaſioned univerſal joy, and was regarded by thouſands as a ſignal inſtance of divine retribution.*(a)*

Piccinino being by this event deprived of all hope of aſſiſtance, was obliged to depend upon his own exertions. In theſe circumſtances he was not diſpirited. The ſucceſſes which he had experienced in the commencement of the campaign, led him to entertain ſanguine hopes of cruſhing the Tuſcan republic. But his confidence prepared the way for his diſcomfiture and diſgrace. His raſh reliance on the valour and diſcipline of his troops tempting him to engage the Florentine army under very diſadvantageous circumſtances, he experienced a total defeat on the twenty-ninth of June, 1440.*(b)* Nor did better

(a) Poggii Historia Flor. p. 339.—*Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 185 — Lorenzo Valla, in his *Antidotus,* charges Poggio with the infamous villainy of forging the commiſsion, by virtue of which Vitelleſchi was arreſted; and aſserts, that he was protected from the puniſhment due to his crime, by the power of the ſtateſmen who had bribed him to commit ſo atrocious a deed. It is not however very probable, that any intereſt could have ſcreened from puniſhment a ſecretary, who ſtood convicted of ſo heinous an offence as counterfeiting the ſignature of a ſovereign prince, for the purpoſe of committing murder: ſtill leſs, that a ſubordinate officer who had taken ſuch a wicked liberty, ſhould have been continued in his place.—*Laurentii Vallæ Antidotus in Poggium, p* 199.

(b) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 186.

ſucceſs attend the arms of the duke of Milan in Lombardy. His forces were put to the rout by Franceſco Sforza, on the banks of the river Oglio. Diſheartened by theſe loſses, Filippo was diſpoſed to an accommodation; and by the mediation of Sforza, peace was again concluded between that prince, and his allied enemies, in the autumn of the year 1441.*(a)*

In the preceding year, Niccolo d' Eſte, marquis of Ferrara, had aſsiduouſly endeavoured to bring about this deſirable event; and though his mediation was unſucceſsful, his friendly interpoſition ſerved to confirm the honourable character which he had ſo long ſuſtained—that of the promoter of peace. In ſuch eſtimation did the duke of Milan hold this virtuous prince, that he invited him to his capital, and entruſted him with the government of his extenſive dominions. This mark of confidence was univerſally regarded as a prelude to the nomination of Niccolo to the inheritance of the ducal throne of Milan; but the hopes which the friends of virtue entertained of witneſsing the happy effects reſulting from his advancement, were deſtroyed by his death, which took place on the twenty-ſixth of December, 1441.

The ſorrow experienced by the ſubjects of Niccolo, in conſequence of this event, was conſiderably alleviated by

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(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 193.

by their obſervation of the extraordinary good qualities of Lionello his ſucceſsor. In the contemplation of the purity of morals, the ſolidity of judgment, and the benevolence of heart, which adorned the character of this exemplary youth, they forgot the illegitimacy of his birth; and when, prompted by an enthuſiaſtic reſpect for his virtues, they joyfully hailed him as their ſovereign, their choice was approved by the ſuffrages of all the ſcholars of Italy. Lionello was indeed the favourite theme of the applauſe of the learned. He not only encouraged the ardour, but participated in the ſtudies of the cultivators of the liberal arts. Under the auſpices of Guarino Veroneſe, he had acquired a profound knowledge of claſsical literature, which enabled him accurately to appreciate the merits of the candidates for literary fame. The promotion of Lionello to the ſovereignty of Ferrara was highly gratifying to the feelings of Poggio. Several years previouſly to this event, he had been induced by the fame of the elegance of taſte which diſtinguiſhed Lionello's juvenile compoſitions, to addreſs to him a letter, in which he highly commended his love of literature, and ſtrenuouſly exhorted him diligently to purſue thoſe ſtudies which he had ſo happily begun.*(a)* The requeſt which he made to this illuſtrious ſtudent to proſecute an inquiry after the loſt decads of Livy, has been already noticed. The homage which Poggio paid to the talents of

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 344.

of Lionello, gave riſe to an epiſtolary intercourſe, the remaining fragments of which afford a ſtriking ſpecimen of the unreſerved friendſhip and liberal familiarity which a community of ſtudies ſometimes produces between perſons who occupy very diſtant ſtations in the ranks of ſociety. The freedom with which Lionello permitted his learned correſpondent to communicate to him his opinions, is conſpicuous in a letter addreſsed by Poggio to Guarino Veroneſe, requeſting him to inform their patron of the ſurprize and concern which he had experienced on receiving the intelligence of his having beſtowed ſome diſtinguiſhed honours on an unworthy candidate.*(a)* Of the character of this candidate Poggio gave his ſentiments in the following letter to Lionello himſelf, which is intereſting on account of the information which it contains with reſpect to the value of books at this period.

" A few days ago there occurred in the chamber of " his holineſs, a diſcourſe on the ſubject of Jerome's " epiſtles. Happening to be preſent on this occaſion, " I obſerved, that I had in my poſſeſsion two very hand- " ſome volumes of thoſe epiſtles, on which one of the " company remarked, that he had offered me eighty " florins for them, but could not obtain them at that " price. To this I replied, that the cardinal of St. Xyſtus " had often importuned me to let him have the volumes " in

(a) *Poggii Epiſtolæ* lvii. *Ep.* liv.

" in queſtion, for which he would willingly pay me one " hundred florins, and think himſelf obliged by the " bargain; and that I ſhould in all probability have ſold " the books at that price, had I not been prevented by " Niccolo Niccoli, who with his accuſtomed moroſeneſs " declared, that by ſo doing, I ſhould give an indication " of a ſordid and abject mind. On this our friend " Auriſpa ſaid, that you very earneſtly wiſhed to add " theſe epiſtles to your collection, and deſired me to ſell " them to you, aſsuring me that you would chearfully " pay any price which I ſhould fix upon them. With " ſome reluctance I complied with his requeſt, and I " write to inform you, that I am willing to part with " the books for the price which has been already offered " for them, namely, one hundred ducats. It remains " for you therefore to determine whether you will pur- " chaſe them at that price. It is a matter of indifference " to me what your determination may be; for I do not " part with the volumes with a view of raiſing money, " but merely through a deſire of obliging you. This " however I will ſay, that no perſon in Italy poſſeſses in " the ſame compaſs a larger or a more correct collection " of epiſtles than thoſe which are contained in theſe two " volumes.

" Your friend, the knight of Reate, when he came " to this town ſome time ago to gratify his love of oſten- " tation (for he wiſhed his folly to be known to every " body) told a certain citizen of Ferrara, that you had

" ſhewn

" ſhewn him the letter which I wrote concerning him to " Guarino. I do not think that this is the fact, but I " wiſh you would inform me whether in this matter he " adheres to his uſual practice of lying. On his departure " hence, he told ſome perſons that he was going to viſit " his uncle; to others he aſserted, that you had nomi- " nated him your ambaſsador at Florence. He would " think himſelf undone were he to utter any thing but " falſehood. He muſt needs be full of truth; for no truth " ever paſses through his lips." *(a)*

Lionello tranſmitted to Poggio the hundred ducats, at which he appreciated his copy of the epiſtles of Jerome. He intimated to him however, that ſome of the learned men of Ferrara thought the price an extravagant one; and he deſired that it might be underſtood, that in acceding to the terms propoſed by his correſpondent, he intended to make him a preſent of the exceſs above the real value of the book. In reply to theſe obſervations, Poggio maintained the correctneſs of his eſtimation, in oppoſition to the judgment of the Ferrareſe connoiſseurs, which he treated with great contempt; and humorouſly obſerved, that he thankfully accepted the gift mentioned by Lionello, not on account of its intrinſic value, but as an earneſt of future munificence; " for," ſaid he, " it is " the

(a) Poggii Epistolæ lvii. *p.* 282.

" the cuſtom of worthy princes, ſuch as you are, to " perſevere in what they have well begun."*(a)*

If the ducat be eſtimated at ſeven ſhillings Engliſh money, the epiſtles of Jerome were purchaſed by Lionello at the expenſe of thirty-five pounds ſterling. From the hiſtory of Filelfo it appears, that at this time the ſalary of a public profeſsor of literature rarely exceeded four hundred ducats; ſo that the price of a couple of volumes, abſorbed one fourth of the ſum which was deemed an adequate annual recompence for the ſervices of a man of conſummate learning. The exhibition of theſe facts will demonſtrate the difficulties which obſtructed the paths of learning in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It will alſo tend to make the modern ſcholar ſenſible of the tribute of gratitude which he owes to the inventor of the typographic art.

It was not without conſiderable reluctance that Eugenius had yielded to Franceſco Sforza the government of the Marca d' Ancona; and he had long waited with impatience for the occurrence of ſome favourable opportunity to wreſt from that chieftain the authority which he had ſo unwillingly conceded to him. In the year 1442, he flattered himſelf that he ſhould be enabled to accompliſh this object of his earneſt deſire. Regnier of

(a) Poggii Epistolæ, lvii. *p.* 284.

Anjou being then cloſely beſieged in the city of Naples by Alfonſo of Arragon, had ſolicited the aſsiſtance of Sforza, who diſpatched a body of troops to make a diverſion in his favour. Eugenius taking advantage of this conjuncture, formally deprived Sforza of the office of Gonfaloniere of the holy ſee, which he beſtowed on his rival Piccinino. In obedience to the orders of his new ſovereign, Piccinino immediately invaded the Marca, and made himſelf maſter of the city of Todi. This incurſion compelled Sforza to withdraw from Naples the forces which he had deſtined to the relief of Regnier, who after the loſs of his capital was compelled to quit Italy, and to retire into Provence.*(a)* Eugenius ſeeing Alfonſo thus firmly eſtabliſhed on the Neapolitan throne, not only agreed to terms of pacification with him, but endeavoured to procure his aſsiſtance in depriving their common enemy of the government of the Marca. The Florentines who had conſtantly entertained very friendly diſpoſitions towards Sforza, openly interpoſed to counteract the meaſures which Eugenius had adopted to expel their favourite general from the territories of the church. This political difference gave riſe to a coolneſs between Eugenius and the adminiſtrators of the Tuſcan government, in conſequence of which the pontiff determined to quit the city of Florence, and to repair to Rome. He accordingly ſet out on his journey on the ſeventh of March, 1443,

(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 195, 196.

1443, and on the enſuing day he arrived at Siena, in which city he continued to reſide till the month of September.*(a)*

Soon after the pontiff's arrival in Siena, his court was deprived of an illuſtrious member, by the death of Nicolao Albergato, cardinal of Santa Croce.*(b)* In this event Poggio was deeply intereſted, as that eminent eccleſiaſtic, who was diſtinguiſhed by his liberal patronage of learned men, had long honoured him with his affectionate eſteem. In grateful reſpect for the memory of his deceaſed friend, Poggio undertook to record his virtues in a funeral eulogium. From this document it appears, that Nicolao Albergato was a native of Bologna, the deſcendant of an honourable family. At an early age he dedicated himſelf to the ſtudy of the civil law, in which he made a conſiderable proficiency. But when he had attained to years of maturity, his religious zeal induced him to bid farewell to the cares of the world, and to enter into the monaſtic fraternity of the Carthuſians. So exemplary was his obſervance of the ſevere rules of this ſtrict order, that ſoon after his admiſsion into it, he was appointed to the office of ſuperior. The fame of his auſterity, his prudence, and diſcretion, having reached to his native place, on the occurrence of a vacancy in the epis-

(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 198.

(b) Muratori Rer. Italic. Script. tom. vi. *p.* 915.

copal throne of Bologna, his fellow citizens unanimouſly invited him to preſide over their ſpiritual affairs. It was not without conſiderable reluctance, that he undertook this arduous office, by the diſcharge of the duties of which he however confirmed and increaſed his reputation. Exerting his utmoſt endeavours to reſtrain the licentiouſneſs of the clergy, he ſtudiouſly ſet his brethren an example of the moſt decorous correctneſs of manners, and of the utmoſt purity of moral conduct. His charity was diffuſive, but diſcriminating. He aſſiduouſly ſought for the children of diſtreſs, who were induced by the ingenuous emotions of ſhame, to hide their poverty in uncomplaining retirement, and he ſecretly relieved their wants. His patriarchal virtues attracted the notice of Martin V. who, without any ſolicitation on his part, raiſed him to the dignity of cardinal. After his advancement to this high honour, he was employed by that pontiff and by his ſucceſsor Eugenius IV. in various negociations of the greateſt importance, in the conduct of which he evinced a degree of ſkill in the tranſaction of buſineſs, which would have done honour to one who had been from his early youth verſed in the active concerns of life. His latter years were years of pain, occaſioned by the pangs of an excruciating diſeaſe, which he bore with the moſt exemplary patience, and from which he was relieved by the welcome hand of death, in the ſixty-eighth year of his age.*(a)* Had

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 261—269. The diſeaſe of which he died was the ſtone. Poggio aſſerts, that after his death, a calculus of the weight of a pound was extracted from his bladder.

Had the cardinal of Santa Croce been rendered illuſtrious by no other circumſtance, his patronage of Tommaſo da Sarzana, who under the appellation of Nicolas V. became one of the brighteſt ornaments of the pontificate, would have been in itſelf ſufficient to ſecure to him the praiſes of poſterity. Tommaſo was the ſon of Bartolomeo dei Parentucelli, a profeſsor of arts and of medicine in the city of Piſa. His mother Andreola, was a native of Sarzana. He had hardly attained to the age of ſeven years, when he experienced an irreparable misfortune in the death of his father. In conſequence of this event Andreola removed from Piſa to Sarzana, where ſhe ſoon conſoled herſelf for the loſs of Bartolomeo, in the arms of a ſecond huſband. This new connexion was rendered unhappy by the illiberality of her ſpouſe, who looked upon his ſtep-ſon with a jealous eye, and embittered the days of the unoffending youth, by the harſhneſs of his behaviour towards him. This unfortunate circumſtance rendered Andreola very anxious concerning the future deſtination of her ſon, which however ſhe flattered herſelf was at length fixed by ſupernatural interpoſition.—When Tommaſo was about ten years of age, he was ſeized by the plague, by which dreadful malady he was ſoon reduced to the laſt extremity. Exhauſted with fatigue, occaſioned by her unremitted attendance upon her favourite child, Andreola ſunk into a diſturbed ſlumber, during the continuance of which an angel ſeemed to appear before her, and to promiſe that the object of her care ſhould recover from his diſeaſe, if ſhe would promiſe to dedicate

to

to the prieſthood the life which, for this high purpoſe alone, the mercy of God would vouchſafe to ſpare. Waking from her dream, Andreola made a ſolemn vow that ſhe would fulfil the direction of the heavenly meſsenger—and her child recovered. In purſuance of her ſacred engagement, when Tommaſo had attained the age of twelve years, ſhe ſent him to commence his ſtudies at Bologna. The rigid moroſeneſs of her huſband however would not permit her to furniſh the youthful ſtudent with any means of ſupporting himſelf. At this feeble age therefore the future pontiff was baniſhed from an uncomfortable home, and ſent forth into the wide world, with no reſources but his genius, his virtues, and the generoſity of the benevolent. Theſe apparently inauſpicious circumſtances called into exertion an energy of mind which cannot be too highly applauded. For the ſpace of ſix years Tommaſo applied himſelf to his ſtudies with aſtoniſhing diligence, and ſoon made conſiderable progreſs in various departments of knowledge. When he had attained his eighteenth year, his literary reputation induced two eminent citizens of Florence to invite him to undertake the education of their children. This invitation Tommaſo readily accepted; and from his eighteenth to his twenty-ſecond year, he was engaged in the laborious employment of initiating his pupils in the rudiments of learning. Having, at the end of four years from the time of his arrival in Florence, by ſtrict œconomy, accumulated a ſum of money, which he deemed ſufficient to enable him to proſecute his ſtudies with advantage, he returned to Bologna.

Bologna. His literary accompliſhments had now gained him the countenance of ſeveral reſpectable friends, at whoſe recommendation he was admitted into the family of Nicolao Albergato, who was then the biſhop of that city. By his prudence and good conduct, he gained the eſteem of his patron, who ſoon promoted him to the ſtewardſhip of his houſehold. In the midſt of the multifarious employments which devolved upon him in conſequence of his acceptance of this office, Tommaſo found leiſure to fathom the depths of ſcholaſtic theology. When he had attained the age of five and twenty, in diſcharge of his mother's vow, he enrolled himſelf in the prieſthood. He continued to live in the family of Nicolao Albergato, for the ſpace of twenty years, at the end of which period the death of that prelate obliged him to ſeek a new patron. His well known virtues ſoon obtained for him the countenance and ſupport of Gerardo d'Andriani, cardinal of Santa Maria Tranſtevere. In the ſuite of this dignitary he accompanied Eugenius to Rome, to which city the papal court was transferred on the twenty-eighth of September, 1443. He had not long reſided in the pontifical capital before he was diſtinguiſhed by the favour of Eugenius, who on the death of his ſecond protector, took him into his ſervice, and appointed him ſubdeacon of the apoſtolic ſee, and ſoon afterwards promoted him to the honourable office of vicechamberlain. *(a)*

During

(a) Vita Nicolai v. *a Jannotio Manetti apud Muratorii Rer. Italic Script, tom* iii. *p.* ii. *p.* 908 *et seq.*

During his attendance upon the pontiff at Bologna, Poggio enjoyed frequent opportunities of becoming perſonally acquainted with the ſingular merits of Tommaſo, whoſe proficiency in literature and ingenuous manners, engaged his eſteem, and conciliated his affection. Nor was Tommaſo inſenſible of the good qualities of Poggio. A memorial of the mutual regard which ſubſiſted between theſe able ſcholars, exiſts in the dedication of a Dialogue *on the Unhappineſs of Princes*, which Poggio inſcribed to his friend before his virtues had been brought forward to public obſervation by his acquiſition of diſtinguiſhed honour and great emolument. In this dedication Poggio notices the common error of men who are ſo much ſtruck with the pomp and grandeur of the great, that they take it for granted, that power and magnificence confer on their poſſeſſors, the gift of true felicity. He obſerves however, that thoſe who riſe above the level of vulgar intellect, ought to be convinced that happineſs does not depend upon the external bleſſings of fortune, but that it is the meed of virtuous diſpoſitions. He profeſſes that it is his object to perſuade men of this truth, and remarks, that a work which is intended to promote this happy end, may with the ſtricteſt propriety be addreſſed to an eccleſiaſtic, who in the whole courſe of his conduct has demonſtrated, that he has ſtudied to be virtuous, rather than to be rich or great. *(a)*

After

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 390, 391.

After this preface Poggio proceeds to ſtate, that in the ſummer of the year in which he followed Eugenius IV. to Florence, to which city the pontiff was baniſhed by the fury of the Roman populace, he happened to pay a viſit to Niccolo Niccoli, whoſe houſe was the common reſort of the learned. Here he found Carlo Aretino and Coſmo de' Medicis, with whom he entered into a converſation on the politics of Italy. After having recounted to his friends the hardſhips which he had lately ſuffered when he was taken captive by the ſoldiers of Piccinino, he complained of the unſettled life which he led in conſequence of his attendance upon the Roman court, which in the courſe of thirty-four years that had elapſed ſince his admiſsion into the pontifical chancery, had never continued for two years together in the ſame place. On this Carlo Aretino remarked, that Poggio was diſcontented with a ſituation which the generality of men regard as an object of envy, ſince the pontiffs and their ſuperior ſervants are uſually deemed maſters of every circumſtance neceſsary to the inſurance of a happy life. In conſequence of this obſervation, Niccolo Niccoli gave it as his opinion, that whatever advantages the attendants and courtiers of great potentates may derive from the controul which they acquire over public affairs, princes themſelves lead a life of anxiety and care, and endure all the inconveniences, whilſt others reap all the benefits of empire. Such is the introduction to the Dialogue *on the Unhappineſs of Princes*, in the body of which Niccolo Niccoli is repreſented as detailing the miſeries of exalted rank. On this

copious ſubject he dilates at conſiderable length, proving from hiſtory that the beſt princes are liable to the bittereſt woes incident to human nature. Gaining courage as he proceeds, he attempts to demonſtrate that eminence of ſtation is unfriendly to virtue. Examining the conduct of the moſt renowned chieftains, both monarchs and demagogues, who have rendered themſelves conſpicuous in the annals of the world, he impeaches them of avarice, cruelty, intemperance, pride, and unbridled ambition; and appeals to his auditors, whether men who are thus enſlaved by their paſsions, can poſsibly be deemed happy. Arguing upon the poſition, that man is the creature of the circumſtances in which he is placed, he maintains, that the poſseſsion of uncontrouled authority, betrays the powerful into vice, inaſmuch as it frees them from thoſe ſalutary reſtraints, which are neceſsary to the confirmation of good principles. Hence he obſerves, it frequently happens, that men who have adorned a private ſtation by their virtues, have become the diſgrace of human nature, when they have been raiſed to the ſummit of power.

From this train of argument Niccolo draws the concluſion, that as happineſs ſeems to be baniſhed from the palaces of the great, if ſhe reſides any where on earth, ſhe muſt be found in the abodes of private individuals, who have the wiſdom to ſet bounds to their deſires, and to dedicate themſelves to the cultivation of their intellectual powers. The conduct of theſe men he propoſes as an object

object of imitation, and exhorts his friends to the ſtudy of thoſe principles of philoſophy which will render them happy in themſelves, and fearleſs of the power, and independent of the favours of the great.*(a)*

Such is the tenour of the Dialogue *on the Unhappineſs of Princes*, in which Poggio dwells with ſo much energy on the vices of exalted rank, that it may reaſonably be ſuſpected, that reſentment and indignation had at leaſt as much influence in its compoſition as the ſuggeſtions of philoſophy. In peruſing this work, the reader is perpetually led to recollect, that its author was a citizen of a proud republic, and a zealot in the cauſe of learning. His democratic aſperity burſts forth in copious enumerations of the follies and vices of ſovereign princes. His literary ſpleen is diſcernible in the ſarcaſtic obſervations which he introduces by the medium of Niccolo Niccoli, on the indifference with which the rulers of Italy regarded his reſearches after the loſt works of the writers of antiquity; in the detail which he gives of the neglect and ſcorn which Dante, Petrarca, and Bocaccio, experienced from the great men of their times; and in the general obſervations which he makes upon the contempt with which mighty potentates too frequently regard the labours of the learned. The effuſions of moroſeneſs, which occur in this dialogue, are however interſperſed with precepts of ſound morality,

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 392—419.

and the hiſtoric details with which it abounds, are at once entertaining and inſtructive. To which it may be added, that Poggio has exhibited in this compoſition a ſtriking, and in all probability a correct delineation of the temper and manners of the ſplenetic, but ſagacious diſputant Niccolo Niccoli.*(a)*

This dialogue was not well calculated to conciliate the favour of ſovereign princes. But the patronage of the great was not the object of its author's wiſhes. It was ſufficient for Poggio, that it was received with approbation by the learned, and that it ſecured to him the eſteem of Tommaſo da Sarzana, and other private individuals, whoſe kind regard might compenſate the depredations made amongſt his comforts by the ravages of death. For he was now arrived at that period of life in which man is generally called to experience the ſevereſt of trials, in being doomed to ſurvive his friends. He had already lamented the death of Niccolo Niccoli. He had attended a mournful aſſiſtant at the funeral of Lorenzo de' Medicis. Leonardo Aretino was the only aſſociate of his early ſtudies,

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(a) In the Baſil edition of Poggio's works, the dialogue *De Infelicitate Principum*, is ſo incorrectly printed, that it is frequently difficult to decypher the meaning of the author. An edition of the ſame dialogue, printed in 12mo. at Frankfort, by Eraſmus Kempffer, in the year 1629, is one of the moſt incorrect books which ever diſgraced a preſs. Fortunately however, the one of theſe copies is frequently of uſe in correcting the errors of the other.

ſtudies, who was left to ſympathize with him in the recollection of their juvenile pleaſures. In the ſtrength of Leonardo's conſtitution, Poggio fondly hoped that he had an aſsurance, that the happineſs which he derived from his friendly attachment, would be prolonged to the cloſe of his own mortal career. But in the commencement of the year 1444, a violent diſeaſe ſuddenly bereft him of the ſole ſurviving companion of his youthful years. In A. D. 1444. Leonardo he lost not only a kind, but alſo a powerful friend. Soon after that accompliſhed ſcholar had fixed his reſidence in Florence, he was called by the favour of the people, to fill ſome of the moſt important offices of the ſtate. By his faithful diſcharge of the duties of theſe offices, he acquired ſuch a high degree of popularity, that he was at length promoted to the chief magiſtracy of the Florentine republic.

So great was the eſtimation in which he was held by his fellow citizens, that when his death was announced, the adminiſtrators of the government charged three members of the council of ten, to conduct his funeral rites with the moſt ſolemn magnificence at the public expenſe.(a) In order to expreſs in the moſt ſignal manner, their reſpect for the memory of the deceaſed, they alſo determined

(a) *Janotii Manetti pro Leonardo Aretino Oratio Funebris, Epistolis Leonardi a Meho editis præfixa, p.* civ.

determined publicly to decorate his remains with a laurel crown. The rare occurrence of this teſtimony of honour (of the conferring of which only three inſtances had hitherto occurred in the long ſeries of the Florentine annals)(a) rendered it the more illuſtrious. In purſuance of the orders of the magiſtrates, the body of Leonardo, arrayed in a ſilken veſt, was carried in an open coffin to the public ſquare of the city. On his breaſt was laid, as a memorial of his patriotiſm, his hiſtory of the Florentine republic. The funeral proceſsion was attended by all the officers of ſtate, except the Gonfaloniere, by the embaſsadors of foreign princes, who happened at this time to reſide in Florence, by a conſiderable number of learned men, and by an immenſe concourſe of the citizens who were not more attracted by the novelty of the ceremony, than by their reſpectful remembrance of the virtues of Leonardo. In the preſence of this auguſt aſsembly, Gianozzo Manetti advanced to the head of the bier, and there pronounced a funeral oration in praiſe of the deceaſed, towards the concluſion of which he fulfilled the decree of the magiſtracy, by crowning him with the laurel wreath. The friends of Leonardo, whoſe judgment was enlightened by the principles of true taſte, muſt have lamented that the taſk of celebrating his virtues, was delegated to Gianozzo Manetti. The ſpeech which he pronounced on this occaſion, is a moſt miſerable compoſition

(a) *Janotii Manetti pro Leonardo Aretino Oratio Funebris, Epistolis Leonardi a Meho editis præfixa, p.* cxiv.

tion, abounding in puerilities, vulgar in its ſtyle, irrelevant in its topics, and moſt tediouſly diffuſe.*(a)* It is highly probable, that the vexation experienced by Poggio on

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(a) The following analyſis of Gianozzo's oration, will be ſufficient to prove, that the foregoing cenſure is by no means too ſevere.—He began his addreſs by informing his auditors, that if the immortal Muſes (" immortales Muſæ divinæque Camœnæ") could have deemed it compatible with their dignity to make an oration either in the Latin or the Greek language, or to weep in public, they would not have delegated to another, the taſk of paying the laſt honours to Leonardo—but ſince this exhibition of their grief was contrary to the uſual habits of the Nine, the adminiſtrators of the Tuſcan government had determined that the virtues of the deceaſed ſhould be celebrated by one of his colleagues. He then with due modeſty declared, that their choice having been directed to himſelf, not on account of his talents, but in conſequence of his filling one of the principal offices of the ſtate, he had prepared himſelf for the occaſion, not to his own ſatisfaction, but as well as the brevity of the time allowed him for the purpoſe would permit.—The orator then proceeded to give a ſketch of the life of Leonardo. When he arrived at that period of it in which the deceaſed became one of the public functionaries of the ſtate, he detailed at ſome length the hiſtory of the Florentine republic during the time of Leonardo's poſſeſſion of civil and military offices. In the courſe of his minute detail of Leonardo's literary labours, he contrived to introduce brief notices of a conſiderable number of Greek and Latin writers, and enlarged particularly upon the merits of Livy and Cicero, to each of whom he repreſented Leonardo as ſuperior, ſince he not only tranſlated Greek authors into Latin, after the example of the latter, but alſo wrote hiſtories, in emulation of the former, thus uniting the excellencies of both. After this, preparing to perform the ceremony of coronation, he proved by hiſtorical evidence, that the cuſtom of crowning emperors and poets was very ancient. Deſcanting on the various kinds of military crowns, he informed his auditors, that by the frequent peruſal of ancient writers, he had aſcertained, that of theſe tokens of honour there were eight different ſpecies, namely, the Corona Obſidionalis, Civica, Muralis, Caſtrenſis, Navalis, Ovalis, quaſi Triumphalis, and Triumphalis. The deſcription of the materials of which theſe crowns were ſeverally made, the occaſions on which they were beſtowed, the

on ſeeing the memory of his beloved friend thus diſgraced by the folly of his panegyriſt, induced him to endeavour to ſuperſede the wretched effuſion of Gianozzo, by a compoſition

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enumeration of divers eminent commanders whoſe brows they had adorned, led the errant orator into a further digreſsion, from which he did not return before he had detailed at great length the reaſons why poets ſhould be crowned with laurel, in preference to ivy, palm, olive, or any other ſpecies of ever-green. This diſsertation on crowns occupies the ſpace of five quarto pages, cloſely printed in a ſmall type. Having exhauſted this topic, Gianozzo proceeded to prove, that Leonardo was a poet. This led him to enumerate moſt of the Greek and Latin poets, and to explain the derivation of the term *poeta*. In treating on this ſubject, he announces the marvellous diſcovery, that he who wiſhes to be a poet, muſt write excellent poems! " Itaque ſi quis poeta eſse cuperet quædam " egregia poemata ſcribat oportet." Having endeavoured by ſundry truly original arguments to vindicate Leonardo's claim to the poetic wreath, he cloſed his harangue by the performance of the preſcribed ceremony.

The following liſt of ſuch of the voluminous works of Leonardo Aretino as have been committed to the preſs, is extracted from the enumeration of his writings, ſubjoined to his life by Laurentius Mehus.

1. *Historiarum Florentini Populi, Lib.* xii. *Per Sixtum Brunonem Argent.* 1610. *fol. Ejusdem traductio Italica a Donato Acciajolo, Venetiis* 1473, *Florentiæ,* 1492. *Venetiis,* 1560. *Ibidem a Sansovino,* 1561.

2. *Leonardi Arretini de Temporibus suis Libri duo. Venetiis* 1475, & 1485. *Lugduni apud Gryphium,* 1539. *Argentorati per Sixtum Brunonem,* 1610. It was reprinted by Muratori, in the 19th vol. of his *Rer. Italic, Script.*

3. *De bello Italico adversus Gothos gesto Libri quatuor.* This work is founded upon the Greek hiſtory of Procopius. It has been edited in the following places: *Fulginii per Emilianum Fulginatum,* 1470. *Venetiis per Nicolaum Jenson,* 1471. *Basileæ,* 1531. *Parisiis* 1534. It was also printed together with Zoſimus, *Basileæ* 1576, and with Agathias and Jornandes, *Lugd.* 1594. *Bellovisiis* 1607.

poſition more worthy of the lamented ſubject of the public grief. However this may be, certain it is, that the funeral oration which he publiſhed on this melancholy occaſion

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4. *De Bello Punico Libri tres. Brixiæ*, 1498. *Paris. apud Ascensium*, 1512. *Augustæ Vindel.* 1537.

5. *Commentarium Rerum Græcarum* was edited by Gryphius, *Lug.* 1539. *Lipsiæ a Joach. Camerario*, 1546. *Argentorati*, 1610, *per Sixtum Brunonem.* It was alſo reprinted by Gronovius in the 6th volume of his *Thes. Antiq. Græc.*

6. *Isagogicon moralis disciplinæ ad Galeotum Ricasolanum.* This work alſo bears the title of *Dialogus de moribus ad Galeottum, &c.* and under the title of *Aristoteles de moribus ad Eudemum Latine Leonardo Arretino interprete*, it was printed *Lovanii*, 1475. *Paris juxta de la Mare*, 1512. *Ibidem*, 1516, *per Ascensium.*

7. *Ad Petrum Histrium dialogorum Libri. Basileæ*, 1536, *per Henricum Petri, & Paris*, 1642.

8. *De studiis et litteris ad illustrem Dominam Baptistam de Malatestis. Argentinæ*, 1521. It was alſo publiſhed by Gabriel Naudæus in 1642, and it compoſes part of a book entitled *Hugonis Grotii et aliorum dissertationes de studiis bene instituendis, Amstelæd.* 1645. It was alſo printed by Thomas Crenius in his *Meth. Stud. tom.* i. *Num.* x. *Rotterod.* 1692.

9. *Laudatio Cl. V. Johannis Stroxæ Equitis Florentini*, was publiſhed by Baluzzi in the third volume of his Miſcellanies.

10. *Imperatoris Heliogabali Oratio protreptica, sive adhortatoria ad Meretrices*, publiſhed by Aldus Manutius in his *Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores Minores, Venetiis* 1519.

11. *Oratio in Hypocritas*, was printed in the *Fasciculus* of Ortuinus Gratius *Coloniæ*, 1535. *Lugd.* 1679. *Londini*, 1691. It was again publiſhed in the year 1699, from a copy in the poſſeſsion of Antonio Magliabecchi.

12. *La Vita di Dante e i costumi e studj di Messer Francesco Petrarca.* The life of Petrarca was edited by Philippus Tomasinus in his *Petrarca Redivivus*,

ſion, affords a ſtriking contraſt to that which wearied the ears of the learned men who attended the obſequies of Leonardo. It is at once dignified and pathetic. Simple in

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printed at Padua, 1650. It was again printed, together with the life of Dante, an. 1671.

13. *Magni Basilii Liber per Leonardum Arretinum de Græco in Latinum translatus—Brixiæ*, 1485, *per Boninum de Boninis—Bononiæ*, 1497. *Argentorati*, 1507. *Paris*, 1508. *Romæ*, 1594.

14. *Marci Antonii Vita.*

15. *Vita Pyrrhi Epirotarum Regis.*

16. *Vita Pauli Emilii.*

17. *Tiberii et Caii Gracchorum Vitæ.*

18. *Q. Sertorii Vita.*

19. *Catonis Uticensis Vita.*

20. *Vita Demosthenis.* The ſeven foregoing pieces of biography, tranſlated by Leonardo, from the Greek of Plutarch, were printed, *Basileæ apud Isingrinium*, 1542.

21. *Leonardi Arretini Apologia Socratis. Bononiæ*, 1502.

22. *Aristotelis Ethicorum Libri decem secundum traductionem Leonardi Arretini. Paris*, 1504, & 1510, *per Henricum Stephanum*, & 1516, *per Ascensium.*

23. *Aristotelis Politicorum, Libri* viii. *per Leonardum Arretinum in Latinum traducti. Venetiis*, 1504, 1505, 1511, 1517. *Basil.* 1538.

24. *Oeconomicorum Aristotelis libri duo, a Leonardo Arretino in Latinum conversi. Basileæ*, 1538.

25. *Oratio Æschinis in Ctesiphontem a Leonardo Arretino in Latinum conversa. Basileæ a Cratandro*, 1528, 1540.

26. *Oratio Demosthenis contra Aeschinem a Leonardo Arretino in Latinum e Græco traducta. Basileæ a Cratandro*, 1528, 1540.

27. *De crudeli amoris exitu Guisguardi et Sigismundæ Tancredi Salernitanorum Principis filiæ. Turon*, 1467. This verſion of Bocaccio's well known tale, is alſo printed in the works of Pius II.

in its method, and well proportioned in the diſtribution of its parts, it is a monument of the ſound judgment of its author. The account which it contains of the life and writings of Leonardo, is ſuccinct and clear. In his delineation of the moral portraiture of that extraordinary man, Poggio evinces a diſtinctneſs of perception, and an accuracy of diſcrimination, which are highly honourable to his underſtanding; whilſt the delicacy with which he ſoftens down the faulty features of Leonardo's character, atteſts the warmth of his affection for the beloved depoſitary of his moſt ſecret thoughts.*(a)*

Leonardo Aretino was perhaps the ableſt ſcholar of his age. He took the lead amongſt the induſtrious ſtudents who unlocked the ſecret treaſures of literature by

28. *Epiſtolarum Libri* viii. *ann.* 1472, *fol. ab Antonio Moreto et Hieronymo Alexandrino.* A ſecond edition was printed, ann. 1495; a third *Auguſtæ*, 1521, *apud Knoblochium*—a fourth, *Baſileæ*, 1535, *apud Henricum Petri*—a fifth *Baſileæ*, 1724, *apud Albertum Fabricium*—a ſixth, *Florentiæ*, 1741. *edente Meho.*

29. *Canzone Morale di Meſſer Lionardo.* This poem is printed in the third volume of Creſcimbeni's Italian poetry.

The inſpection of the foregoing catalogue will evince the diligence with which Leonardo Aretino proſecuted his ſtudies. The numerous editions through which many of his works have paſsed, afford a ſufficient indication of the eſteem in which they were held by the learned men of the fifteenth and ſixteenth centuries.

(a) Poggio's funeral oration for Leonardo is prefixed by Mehus to his edition of Leonardo's letters.

the tranſlation of the works of the Grecian authors. His Latin ſtyle is leſs encumbered with faults than that of any of his contemporaries. Æneas Sylvius indeed declared it as his opinion, that next to Lactantius he approached the neareſt of any of the later writers to the elegance of Cicero. The compoſitions of that celebrated orator do not however ſeem to have been adopted by Leonardo as his model. At leaſt he did not in his writings attain the copious fluency, or the graceful eaſe of diction which diſtinguiſh the works of Cicero. But the luminous diſtinctneſs of his periods entitles him to no ſmall commendation. His ſentences are never embarraſsed or confuſed. He conveys his meaning in few words, and does not fatigue his readers by unreaſonably dwelling upon his topics, or by repeating the ſame idea in varied forms of expreſſion. Hence if his language is not poliſhed to an exquiſite ſmoothneſs, it is ſufficiently preciſe, and its deficiency in melody is compenſated by its ſtrength.

At his outſet in life Leonardo had to ſtruggle with the embarraſsments incident to a very contracted fortune, and was compelled by neceſsity to practiſe the ſtricteſt œconomy. By the liberality of John XXII. however, he acquired an increaſe of property which eventually became the foundation of a very ample fortune. As man is the ſlave of habit, he retained in the midſt of abundance, the attention to the minutiæ of expenſe which was a duty imperiouſly incumbent upon him in the days of his poverty; and his prudent exactitude ſometimes approached the confines

confines of avarice.*(a)* He was alſo impatient in his temper, and too apt to take offence.*(b)* The following anecdote however ſhews, that if he was eaſily excited to anger, he had the good ſenſe to be ſoon convinced of his error, and the ingenuouſneſs of ſpirit to confeſs it. Having engaged in a literary diſcuſsion with Gianozzo Manetti, he was ſo exaſperated by obſerving that the bye-ſtanders thought him worſted in argument, that he vented his ſpleen in outrageous expreſsions againſt his antagoniſt. On the following morning however by break of day, he went to the houſe of Gianozzo, who expreſsed his ſurprize, that a perſon of Leonardo's dignity ſhould condeſcend to honour him ſo far as to pay him an unſolicited viſit. On this Leonardo requeſted that Gianozzo would favour him with a private conference. Gianozzo accordingly attended him to the banks of the Arno, when Leonardo thus apologized for the warmth of his temper— "Yeſterday I did you great injuſtice; but I ſoon began "to ſuffer puniſhment for my offence; for I have not "cloſed my eyes during the whole night; and I could "not reſt till I had made to you a confeſsion of my "fault."*(c)* The man who by the voluntary acknowledgment of an error could thus frankly throw himſelf upon

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(a) Poggii Oratio Funebris in obitu Leonardi Aretini, apud Mehi editionem Leonardi Epistolarum, tom. i. *p.* cxxii.

(b) Ibid.

(c) Janotii Manetti Vita a Naldo Naldio, apud Muratorii Rer. Italic. Script, tom. xx. *p.* 533, 534.

upon the generoſity of one whom he had offended, muſt have poſſeſſed in his own mind a fund of honour and probity. The failings of Leonardo were indeed amply counterbalanced by his ſtrict integrity, his guarded temperance, his faithful diſcharge of his public duties, and his zeal in the cauſe of literature. This being the caſe, it was with juſtice that Poggio prided himſelf upon the intimate friendſhip which ſubſiſted between himſelf and this truly reſpectable character, a friendſhip which was not once interrupted during the varied tranſactions of a period of forty-four years.

The remains of Leonardo were interred in the church of Santa Croce. On a marble monument erected to his memory, the following inſcription is ſtill legible.

POSTQVAM LEONARDVS E VITA MIGRAVIT
HISTORIA LVGET ELOQUENTIA MVTA EST.
FERTVRQVE MVSAS TVM GRAECAS TVM LATINAS
LACRIMAS TENERE NON POTVISSE.

Leonardo was ſucceeded in the chancellorſhip of the Florentine republic by Carlo Marſuppini, more commonly known by the ſurname of Aretino, a ſcholar no leſs diſtinguiſhed by his literary acquirements, than by the dignity of his family. Carlo was the ſon of Gregorio Marſuppini, a nobleman of Arezzo, doctor of laws, and ſecretary to Charles VI. king of France, by whom he was appointed to the government of Genoa. Educated under

under the auſpices of John of Ravenna, he attained to ſuch a proficiency in learning, that in delivering lectures on rhetoric, he became the ſucceſsful rival of Filelfo in the univerſity of Florence. His literary reputation recommended him to the notice of Eugenius IV. who, in the year 1441, conferred upon him the office of apoſtolic ſecretary. This office he continued to hold till the voice of his fellow citizens ſummoned him to the diſcharge of more important duties.*(a)* The friendly intercourſe which had taken place between him and Poggio, in conſequence of their being natives of the ſame place, had been ſtrengthened by their common hoſtility againſt Franceſco Filelfo. Nor was it interrupted by their ſeparation. Whenever Poggio found leiſure to viſit the Tuſcan capital, he experienced a welcome reception from his ancient aſsociate, in whoſe inſtructive converſe he found the moſt pleaſing relaxation from the toils of his office, and from the weariſomeneſs occaſionally attendant upon the diligent proſecution of literary ſtudies.*(b)*

Whilſt Poggio was lamenting the irreparable loſs which he had ſuſtained by the death of Leonardo Aretino, he received intelligence of the ſad cataſtrophe of his old friend and correſpondent Julian, cardinal of St. Angelo. This zealous churchman, who had been diſpatched

(a) Tiraboschi Storia della Letter. Ital. tom. vi. *p.* ii, *p.* 328, 329.

(b) See the introduction to Poggio's dialogue on hypocriſy, in the *Fasciculus Rer. Expet. et Fug. tom.* ii. *p.* 571.

patched into Hungary, veſted with the office of pontifical legate, had heard with indignation that Ladiſlaus VI. king of that country, had concluded a truce for ten years with Amurath emperor of the Turks; and ſtrenuouſly inſiſting upon the deteſtable doctrine, that no faith is to be kept with infidels, he had perſuaded the Hungarian monarch treacherouſly to attack the Muſulmans, who, in reliance on the treaty which had been ſo lately concluded, had withdrawn their forces into Aſia. Juſtly irritated by this act of perfidy, the Turks ruſhed to arms, and gave battle to the Hungarians at Varna, a town in Bulgaria. The iſsue of the day was moſt diſaſtrous to the Chriſtians. Ladiſlaus fell in the battle, his forces were routed, and a body of the fugitives, in the courſe of their flight, overtaking the unfortunate Julian, whoſe pernicious counſels they conſidered as the original cauſe of their preſent calamities, fell upon him, and diſpatched him with a multitude of wounds.*(a)*

The prejudices which Poggio entertained againſt the profeſsors of Mohamediſm, or the partiality of his friendſhip for the cardinal, rendered him inſenſible of the atrocity of the crime by which that turbulent eccleſiaſtic had provoked his fate. From the fragments of an oration which he compoſed on the occaſion of the funeral of Julian, and which are preſerved by Mehus in his life of Ambrogio

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(a) L' Enfant Hiſtoire de la guerre des Huſsites et du Conſeil de Baſle.

brogio Traverſari,*(a)* he ſeems to have conſidered his character as a ſubject of unqualified praiſe. The birth of Julian was obſcure. He proſecuted his ſtudies firſt at Perugia, afterwards at Bologna, and laſtly at Padua.—When his education was finiſhed, he entered into the houſehold of the cardinal of Piacenza, in whoſe ſuite he travelled into Bohemia, where he ſignalized himſelf by his acuteneſs in theological diſputation, and by the aſſiduity of his labours for the converſion of heretics. On his return to Italy, Martin V. rewarded his zeal in the defence of the orthodox faith, by appointing him to the office of auditor of the chamber. He was afterwards ſent in quality of nuncio into France and England. Making mention of his reſidence in the latter country, Poggio aſſerts, that he did there what no one had ever ventured to do before him—in a numerous aſſembly of prelates, he uttered a vehement invective againſt the ſtatutes which had been enacted in the parliament, with a view of reſtraining the authority of the court of Rome, and admoniſhed his auditors to yield obedience to the pope, rather than to the laws of their country—" a proceeding," ſays Poggio, " attended with great peril in a land, the inhabitants of " which were not accuſtomed to ſuch boldneſs." This temerity procured Julian the gift of a cardinal's hat, which was beſtowed upon him by Martin V. immediately on his return from England.*(b)* His ſecond miſsion into

(a) Mehi vita Ambrosii Traversarii, p. ccccxix, ccccxx, ccccxxi.

(b) Mehi vita Ambros. Travers. ut supra.

Bohemia, his pertinacity in ſummoning and preſiding over the council of Baſil, and his converſion to the intereſts of Eugenius, have already paſsed in review in the courſe of the preſent work.

The ſteady forbearance of Julian in refuſing to enrich himſelf by the acceptance of preſents, which Poggio records with enthuſiaſtic applauſe, is a legitimate ſubject of commendation—but his zeal in the cauſe of proſelytiſm is an indication of a narrow mind; and the treachery which ſignalized the laſt official act of his life, fixes on his memory an indelible ſtain. So baſe indeed was his conduct on this occaſion, that his miſerable end may be pointed out as an inſtance of the ſignal vengeance which awaits the perfidious violators of ſolemn treaties.

CHAP. X.

SFORZA deprived of the Marca d' Ancona—Death of Eugenius IV.—Tommaso da Sarzana is elected to the pontificate and assumes the name of Nicolas V.—State of Italy on the accession of Nicolas V.—Exemplary conduct of that pontiff—Poggio's inaugural address to Nicolas V.—His dialogues on the Vicissitudes of Fortune, and on Hypocrisy—His invective against the Antipope Felix—His translation of Xenophon's Cyropædia, and of Diodorus Siculus—His quarrels with George of Trebisond, and Tommaso da Rieti—Celebration of the Jubilee—Publication of Poggio's Facetiæ—Renewal of hostilities between Poggio and Filelfo—Their reconciliation—Poggio's Historia disceptativa convivialis—His letter on the study of Law.

CHAP. X.

IT has been already obſerved, that in the year 1443, Eugenius earneſtly ſolicited the king of Naples to aſsiſt him in expelling Franceſco Sforza from the eccleſiaſtical territories which conſtituted ſuch a formidable acceſsion to his power. In compliance with the wiſhes of the pontiff, Alfonſo advanced at the head of a conſiderable army into the Marca d' Ancona, almoſt the whole of which diſtrict he in a ſhort ſpace of time reſtored to the dominion of the church.(a) In the courſe of the enſuing ſpring however, Sforza invaded the diſputed territory with ſuch vigour and military ſkill, that he once more compelled the pontiff to confer upon him the feudal ſovereignty of all its cities, except Oſimo, Recanati, Fabriano, A. D. 1444.

(a) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 402.

briano, and Ancona.*(a)* But in the year 1445, Eugenius having ſecured the aſsiſtance of the duke of Milan, and of the king of Naples, again violated his ſolemn engagements, and declared war againſt his vaſsal. The perfidy of the pontiff was at length crowned with ſucceſs; for by the joint efforts of the allied powers, Sforza was diſpoſseſsed of the whole extent of the Marca, except the city of Jeſi.*(b)* Thus had Eugenius the ſatisfaction of reducing to obedience almoſt all the territories belonging to the eccleſiaſtical ſtates which refuſed to acknowledge his authority.*(c)* He did not however long enjoy the fruit of

(a) Muratori annali, tom ix. *p.* 406.

(b) Ibid. p. 410, 412.

(c) In the year 1438, Niccolo Piccinino, at the inſtigation of the duke of Milan, had made himſelf maſter of Bologna, which city he held in defiance of the pontiff. His ſon Francesco, to whom he deputed the government of the Bolognese territory in the year 1442, being jealous of the power of the family of Bentivoglio, treacherouſly arreſted Annibale Bentivoglio and two of his moſt intimate friends, and confined them in different fortreſses. Annibale was kept in chains in the caſtle of Varano, which was ſituated in the Parmeſan territory. While he was thus languiſhing in confinement, five of his partizans laid a plan to effectuate his deliverance, which they executed in the following manner. Having ſet off from Bologna, they arrived at the fortreſs of Varano on the night of the ninth of June. They had carried with them a ladder of ropes, and when they came near the fortreſs, they found a wooden ladder, which proved to be very uſeful in the proſecution of their deſign. This wooden ladder one of the party named Galeazzo di Mareſcotti fixed up to the wall of the fortreſs, and aſcending to the top of it, he by the aſsiſtance of a ſpear, fixed the ladder of ropes by an embraſure to the ſummit of the wall, which he eaſily aſcended, and faſtening the ladder of ropes which had been but looſely affixed,

of his anxious deliberations and ſtrenuous exertions. In the commencement of the year 1447, he was ſeized by a diſtemper which ſoon aſſumed a moſt ſerious aſpect. A. D. 1447.

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he directed his companions to follow him, which they did without hesitation. Theſe bold adventurers were materially aided in this ſtage of their enterprize, by a violent ſtorm of thunder and rain. When they had all aſcended the parapet, they drew the ladder up after them, and then Galeazzo aſked one of his comrades named Zeneſe Parolaro, who was well acquainted with the interior of the fortreſs, where Annibale was confined. Under the guidance of Zeneſe they went to a door that led to Annibale's priſon; but they found to their diſappointment, that this door was bolted within. Zeneſe then propoſed that they ſhould wait till day-break, when the guards would open the door in queſtion. To this propoſal they agreed—and according to their expectation, at ſun-riſe the door was unbolted by a centinel, whom they inſtantly ſeized. Galeazzo then committed the priſoner to the care of two of his friends, Michele di Martino and Jacopo Strazzaruolo, commanding them to put him to death if he made the leaſt noiſe, and then ran in purſuit of a ſecond centinel whom he obſerved haſtening up the ſtairs of a tower to ring the alarm bell. This man Galeazzo overtook before he could accompliſh his intention, and led him to the foot of the tower where he found the dead body of his unhappy comrade, who in conſequence of his perſiſting in crying out to give the alarm, had been put to death by Michele. The party then proceeding to the chamber of the commandant, found it bolted. Galeazzo then compelled his priſoner under pain of inſtant death, to deſire the centinel who was ſtationed within to open the door. This being done, Galeazzo and his companions ſprung into the chamber, and took the governor priſoner. They then went to the dungeon in which Annibale was confined, and with proper inſtruments which they had brought with them for the purpoſe, they liberated him from his fetters. By this time it was day-light, and they durſt not leave the caſtle through fear of the inhabitants of the town. They therefore continued in the fortreſs all day, ringing the bell as uſual at the hour of morning prayers, and at the change of guard, and obſerving all the cuſtomary forms of the garriſon ſo exactly, that the townſmen were not aware of what had happened. At one o'clock of the enſuing night, Galeazzo took off the clapper of the bell, and threw it into a moat. He then bound the hands of the commandant,

In this extremity he continued to manifeſt that undaunted reſolution which was a diſtinguiſhing feature of his character, and ſtruggled againſt his laſt enemy with all the vigour of an unyielding ſpirit. His attendants witneſsed his fortitude with the higheſt admiration, and for a time flattered themſelves that the ſtrength of his conſtitution would baffle the power of his diſeaſe. When his friends had at length loſt all hope of his recovery, the archbiſhop of Florence gave him intimation of their opinion by preparing to adminiſter to him the rites which are appointed by the catholic church for the comfort of the dying. But the pontiff indignantly commanded him to forbear his officious interpoſition. "I am not yet," ſaid he, "reduced to the laſt extremity—I will apprize you when "my time is come." This promiſe he fulfilled, and in a manner which evinced the intrepidity and even cheerfulneſs with which he foreſaw his approaching diſſolution. "My friends," ſaid he, to the attendant eccleſiaſtics, during a pauſe which occurred in the reading of morning prayers, "when the holy office is finiſhed I will tell you "a ſtory." The devotional exerciſe being ended, he was reminded

and quitting the fortreſs, compelled him to accompany them, intimating to his wife before their departure, that if any alarm was raiſed, they would moſt aſſuredly put him to death. They then ſet off on their return, and when they had proceeded to the diſtance of about ten miles from Varano, they diſmiſsed the commandant and made the beſt of their way to Bologna. On their arrival in that city, they raiſed an inſurrection of the people, who expelled Piccinino, and declared for independence. The reader will find a minute relation of this bold achievement in Muratori's *Rer. Italic. Script. tom.* xix. *p.* 668.

reminded of his promiſe, on which he thus addreſsed his aſsembled houſehold.—" A certain Athenian once came " forth into the ſtreet, and in the midſt of a large con- " courſe of people, made the following proclamation—If " any one wiſhes to hang himſelf on my fig-tree, let him " make haſte, for I am going to cut it down. In like " manner," ſaid the pontiff, " if my friends wiſh to ſo- " licit from me any favours, they muſt not delay, for " I am ſenſible that the hour of my departure draws " near." The prieſts in waiting having informed him that they were going to offer ſolemn prayers for his recovery—" pray rather," ſaid he, " that the Lord's will " may be done; for we often petition for that which is " not conducive to our good." When he was conſcious of the near approach of death, he piouſly participated in the cuſtomary ceremonies, and then cauſed himſelf to be raiſed from his bed and conveyed to the chair of St. Peter, where he breathed his laſt on the twenty-third day of February, 1447.*(a)* Feb. 23d. 1447.

The funeral eulogium of the deceaſed pontiff was pronounced by Tommaſo da Sarzana, who had lately been promoted by his favour to the biſhopric of Bologna, and to the dignity of cardinal. The acquiſition of this

(a) Muratori Annali, tom ix. *p.* 416. The foregoing particulars of the laſt illneſs and death of Eugenius, were collected partly from a narrative of thoſe events by Æneas Sylvius, which is preſerved in the third vol. of Muratori's, *Rer. Italic. Script. p.* ii. *p.* 890, and partly from the diary of one of the pontiff's chamberlains, which occurs in *p.* 902 of the ſame volume.

March 6th, 1447.

honour prepared the way for the exaltation of Tommaſo to the ſummit of eccleſiaſtical preferment. On the ſixth of March he was by the unanimous voice of the conclave, inveſted with the pontifical purple, on which occaſion he aſsumed the name of Nicolas V. His biographer Gianozzo Manetti aſserts, that his advancement to this high dignity was prognoſticated to him in the following manner. When the conclave was aſsembled for the purpoſe of filling the vacancy which had juſt occurred in the chair of St. Peter, and Tommaſo was ſleeping at dead of night in the ſmall chamber allotted to him on that occaſion, he dreamt that Eugenius appeared before him arrayed in his pontifical robes, of which he diveſted himſelf, and commanded him to put them on; and that on his refuſal to comply with this requiſition, the deceaſed pontiff violently enforced his obedience, and inveſted him with all the inſignia of papal authority. Gianozzo ſeems to intimate, that in this dream there was ſomething præternatural. But a ſlight acquaintance with the conſtitution of the human mind, would have convinced him, that there is nothing miraculous in the circumſtance of a cardinal's dreaming that his brows are encircled with the tiara.*(a)*

On his elevation to the chair of St. Peter, Nicolas found

(a) The unlettered Shakſpeare was much better verſed in the natural hiſtory of eccleſiaſtics, than the learned Gianozzo.

" Sometimes ſhe cometh with a tythe-pig's tail,
" Tickling the parſon as he lies aſleep;
" Then dreams he of another benefice."

found the temporalities of the holy ſee in a lamentable ſtate of diſorder. The military enterprizes of Eugenius had exhauſted the pontifical treaſury; the anarchy to which the long abſence of that pontiff from his capital had given riſe in the eccleſiaſtical territories, had impeded the collection of the public revenues; and the ſchiſm occaſioned by the intemperance of the council of Baſil, had impaired the ſpiritual authority of the church.*(a)* Whilſt the unpropitious circumſtances which thus attended the commencement of his pontificate affected the mind of Nicolas with well founded anxiety, his uneaſineſs was encreaſed by the contemplation of the diſtracted ſtate of Italy. The Venetians and the duke of Milan were engaged in an obſtinate and bloody conteſt, which ſpread devaſtation through the fertile provinces of Lombardy. Alfonſo king of Naples having been inſtigated by Eugenius to declare war againſt the Florentines, had marched on his way to the Tuſcan frontier as far as Tivoli, where his army lay encamped at the time of that pontiff's death.*(b)* Juſtly apprehenſive, leſt the colliſion of intereſts which occurs in a period of general warfare, ſhould diſturb the peace of the pontifical dominions, Nicolas found himſelf ſurrounded by difficulties which called into full exerciſe the extraordinary abilities which he had cultivated with ſuch ſucceſsful induſtry. His firſt object

(a) Jannotii Manetti vita Nicolai V. apud Muratori Rer. Italic. Script. tom. iii. *p.* 921.

(b) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 417.

was to remedy the confuſion which prevailed in the eccleſiaſtical ſtates. This object he ſpeedily accompliſhed by a prudent choice of magiſtrates, by the eſtabliſhment of a well regulated ſyſtem of internal œconomy, and by the mildneſs of a lenient adminiſtration of government. At the price of thirty-five thouſand florins of gold, he purchaſed from Franceſco Sforza, the poſſeſſion of the city of Jeſi.(a) The inhabitants of Bologna, influenced by the remembrance of the benevolence which ſhone conſpicuous in his character, whilſt he exerciſed amongſt them the epiſcopal functions, ſacrificed their independence to their gratitude, and voluntarily ſubmitted to his authority.(b) The endeavours of Nicolas to inſpire the other potentates of Italy with the ardent deſire of peace which influenced his own actions, were not crowned with equally prompt ſucceſs. Alfonſo proceeded on his march to the Florentine ſtate, which he continued to harraſs for the ſpace of three years, at the end of which period he agreed to terms of pacification. The death of Filippo Maria, duke of Milan, which event took place on the thirteenth of Auguſt, 1447,(c) expoſed his dominions to all the miſeries of civil diſcord. Whilſt the king of Naples aſſerted his title to the ducal crown by virtue of a pretended will, ſaid to have been executed by Filippo during his laſt illneſs, Charles, duke of Orleans, maintained

(a) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 417.
(b) *Ibid. p.* 425.
(c) *Ibid. p.* 419.

ed his own claim to the inheritance of the ſovereignty of the Milaneſe, in right of his wife Valentina Viſconti, daughter of the late duke, who had died without male iſsue. As the ſon-in-law of Filippo, Franceſco Sforza alſo deemed himſelf juſtified in aſpiring to the throne of Milan.*(a)* In the mean time the inhabitants of that city, rejecting the pretenſions of all the competitors, declared for independence, and inſtituted a republican form of government. The infant commonwealth was however doomed to ſtruggle with unconquerable difficulties. Whilſt it was harraſsed by the Venetians, its ſtrength was enfeebled by the anarchy of faction. After ſuffering a variety of calamities in the courſe of a protracted ſiege, the Milaneſe were, in the year 1450, compelled by famine to open their gates to Sforza, who on the twenty-fifth of March, ſolemnly aſsumed the ducal diadem.*(b)*

In the midſt of theſe hoſtile operations, Nicolas had the prudence and the ſkill to obſerve a ſtrict neutrality, and thus to ſecure to the eccleſiaſtical territories the bleſſings of public tranquillity. In the contemplation of the growing proſperity of his ſubjects, the pontiff found an ample reward for his anxious endeavours to promote their welfare. The flouriſhing ſtate of his finances, the conſequence of his cultivation of the arts of peace, was alſo

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(a) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 420.

(b) Ibid. p. 441.

alſo a ſource of conſiderable ſatisfaction to him, as it furniſhed him with the means of gratifying his paſsion for the encouragement of learning. Foſtered by his patronage, the ſcholars of Italy no longer had reaſon to complain that they were doomed to obſcurity and contempt. Nicolas invited to his court all thoſe who were diſtinguiſhed by their proficiency in ancient literature; and whilſt he afforded them full ſcope for the exertion of their talents, he requited their labours by liberal remunerations.

Poggio did not neglect to take advantage of the riſing tide of fortune. Eugenius IV. was the ſeventh pontiff in whoſe ſervice he had continued to hold the office of apoſtolic ſecretary without being promoted to any of the ſuperior departments of the Roman chancery. His objections to the eccleſiaſtical life had indeed ſhut againſt him one of the avenues to preferment; and the negligence of his patrons, or the confuſed ſtate of the temporalities attached to the holy ſee, had hitherto prevented him from receiving any recompence for his labours at all adequate to his own eſtimate of their value.*(a)* But when Nicolas V. had aſcended the pontifical throne, his proſpects were brightened by the hope of ſpending the remainder of his days in the comforts of independence, if not in affluence. In order that he might not be wanting to the proſecution of his own intereſts, he reſolved to teſtify his reſpectful attachment to the newly created pontiff,

(a) Poggii Opera, p 32.

pontiff, by addreſsing to him a congratulatory oration. On this occaſion, however, he could not but recollect, that not many years had elapſed ſince he had dedicated to his friend his dialogue *De Infelicitate Principum*, and he was ſenſible, that it was abſolutely neceſsary to preſerve in his addreſs to Nicolas V. ſome degree of conſiſtency with the principles which he had formerly endeavoured to ſanction by the patronage of Tommaſo da Sarzana. In the exordium of his oration, therefore, he profeſsed that he could not conſcientiouſly congratulate the pontiff on his being ſummoned to undergo immenſe labour of body, and to exert continual activity of mind. "For," ſaid he, "if you are determined to guide the veſsel of St. "Peter properly, and according to the precepts of God, "you will not be able to indulge yourſelf in the leaſt re- "laxation, or to give yourſelf up as you have been ac- "cuſtomed to do, to the joys of friendſhip and of litera- "ture. You muſt live according to the pleaſure of "others, and you muſt give up your own eaſe, in or- "der to promote the welfare of the Chriſtian community. "You are placed as a centinel to watch for the ſafety of "all, and you are doomed from henceforth never to "know the bleſsings of repoſe." After enlarging on theſe topics, Poggio declared that he would not run the riſk of incurring the imputation of flattery, by detailing the virtues which adorned the character of his holineſs. "What then," continued he, "can I ſay? In treating "on this ſubject, upon what circumſtances can I en- "large?—I anſwer, that they who are raiſed to the pon-

"tifical

" tifical dignity, may be properly addreſsed in terms of " admonition and exhortation." Proceeding in purſuance of this principle, to enumerate the good qualities which ought to confer luſtre on the pontifical throne, he reminded the father of the faithful, that it was incumbent upon him to be juſt, merciful, beneficent, courteous, and humble. He warned him to beware of ſycophants and deceitful detractors, who frequently betray the beſt of princes into dangerous errors; and finally he exhorted him never to ſell for money thoſe honours and ſources of emolument which ought to be appropriated as the meed of virtue. Having enlarged as much as prudence would permit upon the head of admonition, Poggio thus ſkilfully introduced an eulogium on the virtues of his patron. " But in this addreſs, moſt holy father! I labour under " peculiar difficulties; for my knowledge of your ſingu- " lar and tranſcendant virtues, deprives me of the moſt " copious ſubjects of diſcourſe. For what room is there " for the adminiſtration of exhortation or admonition to " you, who are entitled by your wiſdom to admoniſh " others." After a long detail of the good qualities of the pontiff, the orator thus proceeded.—" I may juſtly, " and without the imputation of flattery, call upon you " to imitate yourſelf—to remember by what arts, and " by what practices, you have reached this high dignity, " and to perſevere in that line of conduct which has led " you to the attainment of ſuch illuſtrious honours. Let " me alſo entreat you, moſt holy father, not to forget " your ancient friends, of which number I profeſs my-

" ſelf

" ſelf to be one. You well know that friendſhip origi-
" nates in a ſimilarity of ſtudies, and in the joint culti-
" vation of virtuous principles. Though the attainment
" of high authority is wont to ſeparate thoſe who have
" been united by the bonds of mutual affection, yet he
" ought more eſpecially to retain his kind regard for his
" former aſsociates, who does not ſeek for friends amongſt
" thoſe who can promote his intereſts, but amongſt the
" virtuous. Forget not then to miniſter to the neceſsi-
" ties of your ancient companions. Become the pro-
" tector of men of genius, and cauſe the liberal arts to
" raiſe their drooping heads. You ſee that literature is
" neglected, whilſt men apply themſelves to thoſe ſtudies
" which convert ſtrife into a ſource of gain. Small is
" the number of thoſe who are inſpired with the love of
" ſcience, and in an age in which ambition and wealth
" are more highly eſteemed than virtue and probity, they
" are regarded as inglorious and ignoble. From you
" alone, moſt holy father, we expect a remedy for theſe
" evils—for you alone is reſerved the honour of reſtoring
" the dignity of literature, and of providing for the
" welfare of the learned." After a brief enumeration of the advantages which would accrue to the pontiff from his encouragement of men of letters, Poggio adverted to his own ſituation and circumſtances in the following terms. " I am now a veteran ſoldier of the Roman
" court, in which I have reſided for the ſpace of forty
" years, and certainly with leſs emolument than might
" have been juſtly expected by one who is not entirely

" deſtitute of virtue and of learning. It is now time " for me to be diſcharged from the ſervice, and to dedi- " cate the remainder of my old age to bodily reſt and to " mental employment. But if, moſt holy father, I do " not obtain the means of an honourable retirement from " your benevolence, I know not to whoſe favour and aſ- " ſiſtance I can lay a claim." *(a)*

So far was Nicolas V. from being offended by the freedom with which Poggio in this oration reminded him of his duty, that he teſtified his eſteem for his monitor by conferring upon him very liberal preſents. So noble indeed was the munificence of the pontiff, that Poggio declared, that in conſequence of the generoſity of this enlightened Mæcenas, he regarded himſelf as at length reconciled to fortune. *(b)* The genial warmth of the ſunſhine of proſperity did not however cauſe Poggio to relax in his mental exertions. On the contrary, the proſpect of honour and profit, and the ſpirit of emulation excited by the ſucceſs of his learned competitors, ſtimulated him, notwithſtanding the advanced period of life to which he had now attained, to purſue his ſtudies with renewed aſſiduity. He had for a long ſpace of time been occaſionally employed

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(a) Poggii Opera, p. 287—292.

(b) " Optimi ſanctiſimique viri Nicolai quinti ſummi pontificis beneficen- " tia id effecit, ut jam querelæ temporum ſint prætereundæ, utque in gratiam " aliquando cum fortunâ videar rediiſſe." *Poggii Opera, p. 32.*

employed in collecting materials for a Dialogue *on the Viciſsitudes of Fortune*. Theſe materials he now began to arrange, and having finiſhed and carefully corrected his work, he ſubmitted it to the public inſpection, under the patronage of the pontiff, to whom he reſpectfully inſcribed it by a dedicatory epiſtle. In this addreſs he deſcanted on the utility of hiſtory, and pointed out the moral tendency of his Dialogue, which by demonſtrating the inſtability of human things, would repreſs the confidence of pride, and the aſpiring views of ambition. He remarked that the ſubject of the work which he now preſented to his patron, was nearly allied to that of the Dialogue *on the Unhappineſs of Princes*, which he had formerly dedicated to him, and that it conſequently had a peculiar claim to his protection. He moreover reminded his illuſtrious friend, that though in his eccleſiaſtical capacity he might be regarded as beyond the reach of misfortune, yet as the ſovereigns of the temporal dominions of the church, the pontiffs themſelves are not exempted from the common lot of mortality; and expreſſed his perſuaſion, that by becoming acquainted with the diſtreſſes of his predeceſſors, he would learn the ſalutary leſſon of caution. *(a)*

The opening of the Dialogue *on the Viciſsitudes of Fortune*, is ſingularly grand and intereſting. It exhibits

(a) Poggii Hiſt. de Variet. Fort. p. 1, 2, 3.

Poggio and his confidential aſsociate Antonio Luſco, fatigued by the inſpection of the remains of Roman magnificence, repoſing themſelves amidſt the venerable ruins of the capitol, which commands a proſpect of almoſt the whole extent of the city. After Antonio has gazed for a few minutes upon the waſte of years, he exclaims with a ſigh, "How unlike, Poggio! is this capitol to that "which Maro ſung, as—

"Chang'd from horrid thorn to glittering gold."

"The gold has now diſappeared, and thorns and briars "reſume their reign. When I conſider our preſent ſitu- "ation, I cannot but remember how Caius Marius, the "pillar of the Roman empire, when he was baniſhed "from his country, landed in Africa, and ſeated himſelf "amidſt the ruins of Carthage, where he meditated upon "the fate of that city, and could not determine whether "he himſelf, or the rival of Rome, afforded a more ſtrik- "ing ſpectacle of the inſtability of human things. But "with reſpect to the devaſtation of Rome, there is no- "thing to which it can be compared. The calamity "which has befallen the miſtreſs of the world, exceeds "in magnitude every misfortune recorded in the annals "of hiſtory.—It is a truly lamentable circumſtance, that "this city, which formerly produced ſo many illuſtrious "heroes and commanders, the parent of ſuch ſignal vir- "tues, the nurſe of arts, the inventreſs of military dis- "cipline, the pattern of ſanctity, the eſtabliſher of laws, "the protectreſs of good morals, the queen of the nations, "ſhould now by the injuſtice of fortune, not only be "ſtripped

" ſtripped of her dignity, but ſhould alſo be doomed to " the moſt wretched ſervitude, and ſhould become ſo de- " formed and abject, as to exhibit no traces of her former " grandeur, except what are to be found in her ruins." *(a)* Theſe obſervations lead Poggio to remark how wonderfully few are the veſtiges of ancient art which remain in the extenſive precincts of Rome. Of theſe veſtiges he gives a complete and intereſting catalogue, which affords a very minute account of the appearance of the ruins of Rome in the fifteenth century. At the cloſe of this enumeration, Luſco reſumes his reflections on the mutability of Fortune, on which Poggio inquires of his friend what he means by that term. In anſwer to his queſtion, Luſco gives the Ariſtotelian definition of Fortune, deſcribing it as an accidental cauſe, and ſays, that thoſe circumſtances happen by Fortune which happen to man contrary to his deſign and intention. To this definition he obſerves that Aquinas accedes. Poggio, remarking that we ſpeak of the good fortune of Alexander or Cæſar, though they laid plans to accompliſh what they effected, objects to the foregoing definition, in the place of which Antonio ſubſtitutes another, which attributes events that are commonly eſteemed fortuitous, to the over-ruling providence of God. After this preliminary converſation, Poggio proceeds briefly to recount ſome ancient examples of the mutability of Fortune, and then deſcribes the aſtoniſhing

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(a) Poggii Hist. de Variet. Fort. p. 6, 7.

aſtoniſhing ſucceſs of the arms of Tamerlane, and the calamities of Bajazet. He then requeſts Antonio to detail ſome of the more ſtriking modern inſtances of a calamitous reverſe of circumſtances. With this requeſt Luſco complies, and the inſtances which he recounts occupy the whole of the ſecond book of the Dialogue, in which various changes which had taken place in different parts of Europe, and particularly in Italy, from the year 1377, to the period of the death of Martin V. are narrated with great perſpicuity and elegance.—The third book comprizes an entertaining epitome of the hiſtory of Italy during the pontificate of Eugenius IV. The fourth book is not ſtrictly relevant to the ſubject of this dialogue, and ought to be conſidered as a ſeparate and detached compoſition. It contains an account of Perſia and India, which Poggio collected from the narrative of Niccolo Conti, a Venetian, who in the courſe of a peregrination of twenty-five years, had penetrated into the regions ſituated beyond the Ganges. This bold adventurer having, during his reſidence in Arabia, been obliged to abjure the Chriſtian faith, immediately after his return to Italy, repaired to the pontifical court to ſolicit from Eugenius IV. the remiſſion of his ſin of apoſtacy. On this occaſion Poggio procured from him an account of his route, and of his obſervations on the manners, cuſtoms, and natural hiſtory of the eaſtern nations. This account he digeſted into a narrative, which will be found not a little amuſing by the modern inquirer, and muſt have

have excited an extraordinary degree of attention at the time of its publication.

The Dialogue *on the Viciſsitudes of Fortune*, is the moſt intereſting of the works of Poggio. It inculcates maxims of ſublime philoſophy, enforced by a detail of ſplendid and ſtriking events. The account which it contains of the changes which took place in Italy at the end of the fourteenth, and at the commencement of the fifteenth centuries, preſents a ſuccinct and clear view of the politics of that period; and the journey of the Venetian traveller merits the attentive peruſal of the curious inquirer into the hiſtory of man.*(a)*

Soon after the publication of the Dialogue on the *Viciſsitudes of Fortune*, Poggio gave a ſtriking proof of the confidence with which he relied on the protection of the pontiff, by publiſhing a Dialogue *on Hypocriſy*. The aſtoniſhing boldneſs with which he laſhed the follies and vices of the clergy in this compoſition has been already noticed. Had he ventured to advance the ſentiments which it contains in the days of Eugenius, he would in all

(a) Poggio's narrative of the diſcoveries made by Niccolo Conti was tranſlated into the Portugueze language, by the command of Emanuel I. king of Portugal. From the Portugueze verſion, an Italian tranſlation was made by Giambattista Ramuſio, who inſerted it in the firſt volume of his collection of voyages and travels, printed in folio at Venice, in the year 1588. A ſmall portion of the firſt book of the dialogue *De Varietate Fortunæ*, containing the deſcription of the ruins of Rome, is printed in the Baſil edition of the works

all probability have expiated his temerity by the forfeit of his life. The predeceſsor of Nicolas felt little veneration for learning, and he united in his character the reſtleſsneſs of ambition, and the rigour of religious auſterity. As the manners of a court univerſally take their complexion from thoſe of the ſovereign, the retinue of Eugenius was crowded with eccleſiaſtics who aſsiduouſly endeavoured to riſe to preferment by aſsuming a ſanctity of deportment which they well knew to be the ready paſsport to the favour of the pontiff. Theſe men who attempted to diſguiſe their pride under the garb of humility, and who, whilſt they made a public profeſsion of exceſsive piety, ſecretly indulged themſelves in the groſseſt debauchery, Poggio had long regarded with contempt and indignation, and in his Dialogue *on Hypocriſy* he attacked them with all the ſeverity of ſarcaſtic wit. This dialogue he inſcribed to one of his friends, named Franceſco Aretino, to whom he obſerved in his prefatory addreſs,

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of Poggio. A manuſcript copy of the entire dialogue was diſcovered in the library of the cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, nephew of pope Alexander VIII. by Lionardo Adami da Bolſena, who began to prepare it for the preſs. Lionardo having died before he had finiſhed the tranſcript of the firſt book, the execution of his deſign was completed by the Abate Domenico Giorgi da Rovigo, who finiſhed the tranſcript of the dialogue, illuſtrated it with notes, and ſubjoined to it fifty-ſeven of Poggio's epiſtles, which had not yet ſeen the light. Under the ſuperintendence of the Abate Oliva, the work thus prepared, was printed at Paris in 4to. an. 1723, by Couſtellier.

Zeno Diss. Voss. tom. i. *p.* 40. *Dominici Georgii Præfatio ad Poggii Hist. de Variet. Fort.*

dreſs, that as he had formerly endeavoured to diſplay the deſpicable nature of avarice, he had lately undertaken to deſcribe in its true colours, hypocriſy, a vice of a much more odious complexion. He alſo intimated to Franceſco that he was fully apprized, that by the publication of the work which he then tranſmitted to him, he ſhould give very great offence: but at the ſame time he ſarcaſtically remarked, that they who complained of the ſeverity of his animadverſions would virtually acknowledge themſelves guilty of the crime which it was his intention to hold up to general reprobation.

In the introductory part of the dialogue we are informed, that Poggio was accuſtomed to take frequent journies to Florence; on which occaſions his firſt viſit was generally paid to Carlo Aretino—that the laſt time he had an opportunity of paying his reſpects to that eminent ſcholar, he found him in his library engaged in reading Plato's Politia—and that after the cuſtomary interchange of civilities, Carlo, inquiring into the ſtate of the Roman court, aſked him whether it was as much frequented by hypocrites as it formerly was, during the pontificate of Eugenius. To this inquiry Poggio anſwered, that the reign of hypocrites was come to an end. Carlo rejoicing in this information, uttered a vehement philippic againſt hypocriſy, which, he obſerved, was more ſeverely reproved by Jeſus Chriſt than any other vice. Diſplaying its evil conſequences, he remarked that hypocriſy tends

to deſtroy confidence between man and man, and to throw ſuſpicion on virtue itſelf.

After the detail of this converſation, Poggio introduces as a third interlocutor, Jeronimo Aretino, Abbot of Santa Fiore, an eccleſiaſtic of conſiderable learning and of unblemiſhed manners, who is repreſented as unexpectedly paying a viſit to Carlo. On the arrival of Jeronimo, Poggio obſerves, that as this reſpectable dignitary had ſpent ſo large a portion of his days amongſt the clergy, he muſt be well qualified to detail the characteriſtics of hypocriſy. This taſk, however, Jeronimo declines, as being an invidious one, and attended with no ſmall degree of danger. But at the ſolicitation of his friends, and under the aſsurance of ſecreſy, he proceeds to advert to the derivation of the word *hypocrite*, which he defines as a term, uſed to expreſs the idea of a man who, for the promotion of ſome evil purpoſe, pretends to be what he is not. This definition he obſerves, includes not merely pretenders to extraordinary ſanctity, but impoſtors of every ſpecies. Carlo however wiſhes to limit the meaning of the term to religious deceivers, whom he thus deſcribes—" They who aſsume the appearance of " uncommon ſanctimonioufneſs, who walk the ſtreets " with ſqualid countenances, in thread-bare garments, " and with naked feet—who affect to deſpiſe money— " who are continually talking about Jeſus Chriſt—who " wiſh to be eſteemed virtuous, whilſt their deeds do not " correſpond with their outward appearance—who ſe-

" duce

" duce fooliſh women—who quit their cloiſters, and tra-
" vel up and down the country in queſt of fame—who
" make an oſtentatious diſplay of abſtinence—who de-
" ceive and defraud—theſe men, I think, may be juſtly
" denominated hypocrites." After this deſcription of the character of a hypocrite, Poggio propoſes the queſtion, whether men who are thus guilty of impoſture are not leſs dangerous to ſociety than thoſe who openly profeſs to deſpiſe the obligations of morality, ſince whatever vices hypocrites may privately practiſe, they inculcate upon others the principles of virtue, and endeavour to palliate their very crimes by attributing the commiſsion of them to good motives. This laſt remark gives Carlo occaſion to detail ſeveral ſcandalous anecdotes of certain eccleſiaſtics who, under the cloak of religious auſterity, had indulged themſelves in the moſt abominable gratification of their appetites. In the ſequel of his ſpeech, Carlo utters an eloquent invective againſt the ambition of the clergy who then frequented the Roman court. Poggio concurring with him in ſentiment, attacks the popular preachers of that time. He next animadverts upon the begging friars, the confeſsors, and the eccleſiaſtics who pretend to an extraordinary degree of temperance and maceration of the fleſh. In ſpeaking of this laſt deſcription of hypocrites, he relates an anecdote of an Auguſtine friar who undertook to ſubſiſt for eight days upon the holy wafer uſed in the euchariſt, and who actually quitted his cell at the end of the preſcribed term in perfectly good health, and without the leaſt diminution of his corpulency. This

impoſtor gained great celebrity by his apparently miraculous abſtinence; but after the lapſe of ſome years it was diſcovered, that in ſpite of the vigilance of his guards, he had conveyed into his apartment a quantity of bread ſaturated with wine, which he had injected into his large leathern girdle, and that he had moreover provided himſelf with candles compoſed of ſugar, ſlightly coated over with wax, which afforded him a plentiful ſupply of nouriſhment. When Poggio has finiſhed his remarks, Carlo attacks the *Fratres Obſervantiæ*, and the remainder of the dialogue is occupied by ſtrictures on the character and conduct of ſeveral individuals who had, during the time of Poggio's reſidence in the Roman court, diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the gravity of their demeanour, and by the ſanctity of their religious profeſsion.*(a)*

The talent of ſarcaſtic wit which Poggio diſplayed in this dialogue, and in his invectives againſt Franceſco Filelfo, in all probability cauſed Nicolas V. to delegate to him the taſk of drawing up a philippic againſt Amedæus of Savoy, who, under the title of Felix, perſiſted in claiming the honours of the pontificate. On the death of Eugenius, this antipope had endeavoured, by proceeding to the election of cardinals, and by the miſsion of embaſſadors

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(a) Fasciculus Rer. Expet. et Fugiend. tom. ii. *p.* 570—583. An edition of Leonardo Aretino and Poggio's dialogues on hypocriſy was publiſhed by Hieronymus Sincerus Lotharingus, *ex typographid Anissonid, Lugduni*, 1679. *in* 16.

ſadors to ſeveral of the Chriſtian powers, to vindicate his rights, as the only legitimate ſucceſsor of St. Peter.*(a)* Nicolas naturally watching the conduct of his competitor with a jealous eye, not only aimed at his devoted head the thunders of the church, but threatened to deprive him of the ſovereignty of Savoy, which he deſtined as the reward of Charles, king of France, whom he ſolicited to aſsiſt him in the ſubjugation of the pertinacious ſchiſmatic.*(b)* Eagerly taking up the quarrel of his maſter, Poggio attacked the offender in a long invective. A few extracts from this compoſition will demonſtrate, that in the impartiality of his acrimony, he did not treat the ducal hermit of Ripaille with more lenity than he had ſhown to the humble profeſsor of rhetoric.

In his exordium he ſays, " I cannot ſuppreſs the grief " which I feel when I ſee another Cerberus, whom we " thought to have been lulled aſleep, newly rouſed from " the infernal regions to the diſturbance of religion, and " the deſtruction of the church. For what true believer " is not deeply affected with ſorrow, when he beholds a " rapacious wolf who was formerly fed on the blood of " the faithful, now putting on the ſemblance of a lamb, " for the purpoſe of invading, under the guiſe of humi- " lity, the peace of the church, which he has in vain " attacked

(a) *Poggii Opera, p.* 159.

(b) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 417.

" attacked by open violence. Who is there that does " not lament that a golden calf, ſet up by an aſſembly " of abandoned men, to the diſgrace of the faith, in " contempt of Chriſt and his doctrine, ſhould under the " pretence of peace, endeavour by his envoys and letters " to pervert the minds of faithful and upright princes " from the true belief? Who would not call upon God " to puniſh ſuch hypocriſy, ſuch villainy, ſuch baſeneſs? " Who would not deteſt the perverter of the faith, the " enemy of religion, the author of ſchiſm, the high- " prieſt of malignity.—This is the iſſue of his affected " ſanctity of manners, his relinquiſhment of the world, " his ſolitary retirement, in which he pretended to dedi- " cate himſelf to the ſervice of God for the purpoſe of " ſhamefully demonſtrating his infidelity; in which he " arrayed himſelf in humble apparel, in order that he " might afterwards like a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he " might devour, deſtroy all religion, excite a ſchiſm, " and rend the unſeamed garment of Chriſt."

Having thus put in a railing accuſation againſt Amedæus, Poggio proceeded to utter a philippic againſt the members of the council of Baſil, who had attempted to raiſe him to the pontificate. " I wonder," ſays he, " that any one is ſo void of underſtanding as to believe, " that any thing good could proceed from that ſink of " iniquity, the ſynagogue of Baſil. Is there any one ſo " fooliſh as to imagine that this conventicle of repro- " bates could produce any thing but a monſtrous birth, " or

" or that it has any authority to ordain the meaneſt prieſt,
" much leſs to create a pontiff, except the authority
" which it may have derived from the devil and his fol-
" lowers? For who," ſays he, " is ignorant of the cha-
" racter of that tumultuary band of moſt debauched
" men? Who does not know what ſort of people, how
" nefarious, how abandoned, how wicked, were aſsem-
" bled in that ſink of iniquity—apoſtates, fornicators,
" raviſhers, deſerters, men convicted of the moſt ſhame-
" ful crimes, blaſphemers, rebels againſt God and their
" ſuperiors. Finally, the mob which was congregated at
" Baſil conſiſted of the ſcum of the earth, who were
" hired by you with bribes, and repaired to that city in
" order to gratify their evil paſsions, and to obtain a li-
" cenſe for tranſgreſsion. There attended as the execu-
" tors of their decrees, cooks, butchers, tailors, fiſh-
" mongers, inn-keepers, apothecaries—in ſhort, a bar-
" barous collection of filthy rabble, who from taverns
" and eating-houſes invoked the holy ſpirit, for the pious
" purpoſe of cauſing a diviſion amongſt Chriſtian people."

From ſuch an aſsembly as this, Poggio obſerved that nothing ſalutary could proceed, ſince a bad tree can never bring forth wholeſome fruit. After ridiculing the ſteps which Amedæus had taken to eſtabliſh his authority, and charging him with endeavouring to promote his own intereſt by the arts of corruption, he reminded him that he was now deſerted by the few partizans who had formerly eſpouſed his cauſe, and that all the princes of Chriſtendom

tendom had declared themſelves in favour of Nicolas. "Since this is the caſe," continued he, "what have "you left but empty hopes: why then do you "trouble kings and princes? why do you continue "to weary their ears, and to tempt them by your "evil practices? why do you call all people your "ſons, when nobody acknowledges you as a father. "Awake from your long ſlumber, and conſider that you "were once a Chriſtian. Return to that ſaviour whom "you have renounced. Peter the chief of the apoſtles "once denied his Lord, and obtained pardon by a con-"feſsion of his crime. Imitate his contrition, and ac-"knowledge that you have ſinned againſt the Lord. No "longer wiſh to deceive yourſelf or the people of Chriſt. "Confeſs that you are what you are. Reſume your an-"cient manners and your former life: enter upon a train "of thought worthy of a good man: return into favour "with God, and gain the good will of men: caſt off the "burthen of conſcience which muſt of neceſsity weigh "heavy upon you day and night: begin to be wiſe in "your old age: lay aſide foreign ornaments, and diveſt "yourſelf with a good grace of the honours which you "have ſo baſely ſeized: conſult for your reputation, your "honour, and the dignity of your hoary hairs. Conſider "for a moment what men ſay and think of you. All the "world execrates the ſchiſm, and you the ſower and in-"ſtigator of it. Waſh away then this ſtain, this diſgrace to "your family. Suffer not poſterity to abhor you as the "origin of ſtrife. If you contemn the judgment of men,

"if

" if you deſpiſe infamy, yet remember that God ſuffers " no wicked action to paſs unpuniſhed. Remember, that " if you do not repent, you will incur the pain of dam- " nation. Other puniſhments are comparatively light, " becauſe they endure but for a ſeaſon. But the ſoul, " when once loſt is loſt to all eternity; and unleſs you " repent, you will be doomed with other hereſiarchs, " to ſuſtain the horrors of everlaſting fire." *(a)*

Theſe animadverſions of Poggio upon the conduct of Amedæus and his abettors, were calculated to inflame reſentment rather than to prepare the way for conciliation. The pacific ſpirit of Nicolas ſuggeſted meaſures much more conducive to the extinction of the ſchiſm. By the grant of a cardinal's hat, and the privilege of precedence in the conclave, the antipope was induced to renounce the equivocal honours which he held by ſo dubious a title, and to render homage to his rival, as the true ſucceſſor of St. Peter. After the fulfilment of theſe terms of pacification, which were concluded in the year 1449, Amedæus retired to his hermitage of Ripaille, where he devoted the remainder of his days to works of piety, and in the neighbourhood of which he terminated his mortal career on the ſeventh of January, 1451. *(b)* A. D. 1449.

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 155—164.

(b) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 431.

Nicolas being thus freed from the vexation and apprehenſion which had been excited in his mind by the claims of his rival, applied himſelf with renewed ſpirit to the promotion of the intereſts of literature. At his requeſt, and under his patronage, the ſcholars who frequented his court, applied themſelves with the moſt earneſt aſſiduity to the ſtudy of the Greek tongue. In compliance with the wiſhes of the pontiff, and in emulation of his learned aſſociates, Poggio contributed to the illuſtration of Grecian literature, by tranſlating into Latin the works of Diodorus Siculus,*(a)* and the Cyropædia of Xenophon.*(b)* The former of theſe works he dedicated to Nicolas V. When he had finiſhed his verſion of the life of Cyrus, he deliberated for ſome time on the choice of a patron under whoſe auſpices he might ſubmit it to the inſpection of the learned. At length the fame of the ſplendid talents and liberal diſpoſition of Alfonſo, king of Naples, determined him to inſcribe his tranſlation to that monarch.*(c)* On this occaſion

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(a) This tranſlation of Diodorus Siculus, was printed, *Bononiæ*, 1472. *in folio. Bandini catalogus Bibliothecæ Laurentianæ, tom.* ii. *p.* 819.

(b) Poggii Hist. de Variet. Fortunæ, p. 3. From the prefatory remarks which Poggio prefixed to his verſion of the Cyropædia, and which are quoted by Bandini, in his *Catalogus Bibliothecæ Laurentianæ, tom.* ii. *p.* 351, it ſhould ſeem, that by omitting many of the dialogues and ſpeeches, he had conſiderably abridged the work of Xenophon, whoſe eight books he had compreſsed into ſix. An Italian tranſlation of Poggio's verſion of the Cyropædia, made by his ſon Jacopo, was publiſhed at Florence by the Junta, *an.* 1521.

(c) Facii Opera, p. 98.

occaſion ſome of the Neapolitan ſcholars who regarded Poggio with a conſiderable degree of animoſity, gratified their malevolence, by vilifying his work to the king, who ſeems to have lent too ready an ear to their cenſures. Poggio highly reſented this conduct of Alfonſo, whom he ſtigmatized in a letter to Bartolomeo Facio, one of the learned men who enjoyed that monarch's favour and protection,*(a)* as a prince who in conſequence of his own

 ignorance,

(a) Bartolomeo Facio was a native of Spezia, a ſea-port in the Genoeſe territory. The moſt curious inquirers into the hiſtory of literature, have not yet been able to aſcertain the preciſe period of his birth. From many paſsages however which occur in his works, it appears, that he was indebted for inſtruction in the Latin and Greek languages to Guarino Veroneſe, whom he frequently mentions in terms of affectionate eſteem. Facio was one of the numerous aſsemblage of ſcholars that rendered illuſtrious the court of Alfonſo, king of Naples, by whom he was treated with diſtinguiſhed honour. During his reſidence at Naples, the jealouſy of rivalſhip betrayed him into a violent quarrel with Lorenzo Valla, againſt whom he compoſed four invectives. The following liſt of his other works is extracted from his life, prefixed by Mehus to an edition of his treatiſe *De Viris illustribus*, publiſhed at Florence, *an.* 1745.

1. *De bello Veneto Clodiano ad Joannem Jacobum Spinulam Liber. Lugd.* 1568.

2. *Aliud parvi temporis bellum Venetum*, was printed together with the former.

3. *De humanæ vitæ felicitate ad Alphonsum Arragonum et Siciliæ regem. Hanoviæ, typis Vechellanis*, 1611. *Post epitomen Felini Sandei de Regibus Siciliæ, &c.*

4. *De excellentiâ et præstantiâ hominis.* This work, which is erroneouſly aſcribed to Pius II. was printed, together with the preceding treatiſe, *Hanoviæ*, 1611.

5. *De rebus gestis ab Alphonso primo Neapolitanorum rege Commentariorum Libri* x. *Lugduni*, 1560, *apud hæredes Sebastiani Gryphii in* 4to.—*Ibidem,*

ignorance, gave implicit credit to the opinions of others, and declared, that he would avail himſelf of the earlieſt opportunity to retract every thing which he had ſaid in his commendation.*(a)* The indignant manner in which he commented on the cool reception which his verſion of the Cyropædia had experienced at the court of Naples, evinced, that the influence of age had not abated his ſpirit. Indeed the unreſtrained licenſe of his ſpeech, about this time betrayed him into a conteſt with one of his fellow labourers in the field of literature, in which he appears to have manifeſted not only the petulance, but alſo the proweſs of youth.

The antagoniſt of Poggio on this occaſion was George of Trebiſond, a native of the iſle of Candia, who adopted the deſignation of *Trapezuntius*, or of Trebiſond, in reference to the reſidence of his anceſtors. He was induced to quit the place of his nativity by the invitation of Franceſco

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1562 & 1566. The ſeven firſt books of this work were alſo publiſhed, *Mantuæ anno* 1563, *a Francisco Philopono*. It has alſo been reprinted in various collections of Italian hiſtory.

6. *Arriani de rebus gestis Alexandri Libri* viii. *Latine-redditi. Basileæ*, 1539. *in fo. a Roberto Winter. Pisauri*, 1508. *Lugduni*, 1552.

7. *Epistolæ*. Several of Facio's epiſtles are ſubjoined by Mehus to his edition of the treatiſe *De Viris illus.* It is juſtly obſerved by Tiraboſchi, that Facio's ſtyle is much more elegant than that of any of his contemporaries. *Mehi Vita Bartolomei Facii—Tiraboschi Storia della Letter. Ital. tom. vi. p.* ii. *p.* 80.

(a) Facii Opera, p. 99, 100, 101.

Franceſco Barbaro, who on his arrival in Italy, procured him the honour of being enrolled amongſt the citizens of Venice.*(a)* Having made a competent progreſs in the knowledge of the Latin tongue, he went to Padua, and afterwards to Vicenza, in which latter city he was employed in the capacity of public tutor.*(b)* His reſidence in Vicenza was not however of long duration. Finding himſelf harraſsed by the intrigues of Guarino Veroneſe, who regarded him with ſentiments of determined hoſtility, he gave up his profeſſorſhip, and repaired to Rome, in which city he arrived in the year 1430.*(c)* His Venetian friends having recommended him to the protection of Eugenius IV. that pontiff conferred upon him the office of apoſtolic ſecretary. He continued to hold this office under Nicolas V. who employed him in translating the works of various Greek authors. When however Nicolas had aſsembled at his court the moſt accompliſhed ſcholars of the time, who were able to detect the errors of literary pretenders by the touch-ſtone of enlightened criticiſm, the reputation of George of Trebiſond began rapidly to decline.*(d)* This circumſtance probably had an unhappy effect upon his temper, and by rendering him

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(a) Apostolo Zeno Dissert. Voss. tom. ii. *p.* 2.

(b) Ibid. p. 4.

(c) Ibid.

(d) Hodius de Græcis Illus. p. 104.

him apt to take offence, prepared the way for his quarrel with Poggio. This quarrel took place in Pompey's theatre, where the pontifical ſecretaries were aſſembled for the purpoſe of correcting certain official papers, and was occaſioned by ſome ſatiric remarks of Poggio, which provoked George of Trebiſond to chaſtiſe him by a violent blow on the face. Poggio did not tamely ſubmit to this indignity. Accepting the appeal to arms, he repelled force by force, and the conflict, after having been maintained by the due progreſſion of ignoble weapons, was finally referred to the arbitrement of the ſword.*(a)* As it does not appear that either of the parties received any ſerious hurt in this rencounter, it is probable that they were prevented from proceeding to mortal extremities by the friendly interference of the by-ſtanders. The animadverſions of his rivals were however fatal to the peace of George of Trebiſond, who at length found the mind of the pontiff ſo much alienated from him, that he thought it expedient to quit the Roman court. He accordingly retired to Naples, where he was honourably received by king Alfonſo. But in the year 1458, the good offices of Filelfo reſtored him to the favour of Nicolas V. who reinſtated him in his ancient ſituation in the Roman chancery.*(b)*

George

(a) Vallæ Antidotus in Poggium, p. 42. Poggii Opera, p. 222.

(b) Hodius de Græcis Illus. p. 106.

George of Trebifond was not the only member of the court of Nicolas V. whom Poggio regarded with ſentiments of enmity. Tommaſo da Rieti, whom, under the deſignation of *Eques Reatinus*, he had ſtigmatized in the letter to Lionello d'Eſte, which is quoted in the ninth chapter of this work, having provoked him to hoſtility, he compoſed an invective againſt him, a copy of which is ſtill extant in the Laurentian Library.*(a)*

In the year 1450, the celebration of the Jubilee attracted to Rome a prodigious concourſe of people. As the plague was at this time raging in various parts of Italy, the multitude of devotees who were aſsembled to aſsiſt at the ſplendid ſolemnities of this feſtive ſeaſon, rendered the pontifical capital a focus of infection.*(b)* As ſoon therefore as Nicolas had finiſhed the cuſtomary religious exerciſes, he fled from the impending danger to Fabriano, a town ſituated in the Marca d'Ancona. Poggio availed himſelf of this opportunity to viſit his native place, where he dedicated his leiſure to the proſecution of his ſtudies, and A.D. 1450.

(a) Bandini Catalogus Biblioth. Laur. tom. iii. p. 438.

(b) Muratori Annali, tom. ix. *p.* 438. Muratori informs us, that the joy occaſioned by the celebration of this jubilee experienced only one interruption, which was occaſioned by the following accident. As an innumerable multitude of people were returning on the nineteenth of December from receiving the pontifical benediction, they were on a ſudden ſo much alarmed by the braying of an aſs, that they trampled upon each other in ſuch precipitate diſorder, that upwards of two hundred periſhed in the throng.

and to the enjoyment of ſocial intercourſe with his ſurviving Tuſcan friends.

It was during this ſeaſon of relaxation from the duties of his office, that he publiſhed his *Liber Facetiarum* or collection of jocoſe tales. In the preface to this curious miſcellany, he intimates, that he had engaged in a work of ſuch levity, with a view of exerciſing himſelf in Latin compoſition.*(a)* The recording of theſe witticiſms revived in his recollection the occurrence of days of pleaſure which were paſt, never to return. From the poſtſcript to the *Liber Facetiarum* we learn, that during the pontificate of Martin V. the officers of the Roman chancery were accuſtomed to aſſemble in a kind of common hall. In this apartment, which from the nature of the converſation of its frequenters, who were much more ſtudious of wit than of truth, acquired the name of *Bugiale*,*(b)* they diſcuſsed the news of the day, and amuſed themſelves by the communication of entertaining anecdotes. On theſe occaſions they indulged themſelves in the utmoſt latitude of ſatiric remark, dealing out their ſarcaſms with ſuch impartiality, that they did not ſpare even the pontiff himſelf. The leading orators of the Bugiale were, Razello of

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(a) Poggii Opera, p. 420.

(b) Bugiale is derived from the Italian word *Bugia*, a falſehood, and is interpreted by Poggio "*mendaciorum officina*;" i. e. the manufactory of lies.

of Bologna, Antonio Luſco, *(a)* Cincio, and Poggio; and the pointed jeſts and humorous ſtories which occurred in the courſe of the unreſtrained converſations, in which theſe mirthful ſcribes bore a principal part, furniſhed the greater portion of the materials for the *Liber Facetiarum.(b)*

(a) Antonio Luſco was celebrated for his knowledge of the civil law, which procured him the honour of being ſelected as a proper perſon to aſſiſt Franceſco Barbaro in reviſing the municipal regulations of the city of Vicenza. In the courſe of his journey to that place he overtook a Venetian, in whoſe company he rode to Siena, where they took up their lodgings for the night. The inn was crowded with travellers, who, on the enſuing morning, were buſily employed in getting their horſes out of the ſtable, in order to purſue their journey. In the midſt of the buſtle, Luſco obſerved his Venetian friend booted and ſpurred, but ſitting with great tranquillity at the door of the inn. Surpriſed at ſeeing him thus inactive, he told him, that if he wiſhed to become his fellow traveller for that day's journey, he muſt make haſte, as he was juſt going to mount; on which the Venetian ſaid, "I ſhould be happy to accompany you, "but I do not recollect which is my horſe, and I am waiting till the other "gueſts are gone in order that I may take the beaſt which is left." This anecdote Luſco communicated to his fellow ſecretaries; and Poggio did not fail to inſert it in his *Facetiæ*. The horſemanſhip of the Venetians appears to have been a fruitful ſubject of mirth to the frequenters of the *Bugiale*. The following ſtory proves what utter ignorance of equeſtrian affairs the wits of the pontifical chancery imputed to that amphibious race of men. "As a Venetian," ſays Poggio, "was travelling to Trivigi on a hired horſe, attended by a running footman, the "ſervant received a kick from the beaſt, and in the firſt emotion of pain took "up a ſtone and threw it at the aggreſſor; but miſsing his aim, he hit his maſ-"ter on the loins. The maſter looking back, and ſeeing his attendant limping "after him at ſome diſtance, aſked him why he did not quicken his pace. The "ſervant excuſed himſelf by ſaying, that the horſe had kicked him; on which "his maſter replied, I ſee he is a vicious beaſt, for he has juſt now given me a "ſevere kick on the back." *Agostini Istoria degli Scrit. Viniz. tom.* ii. *p* 53—*Poggii Opera, p.* 444, 464.

(b) Poggii Opera, p. 491.

This work is highly intereſting on account of the anecdotes which it contains of ſeveral eminent men, who flouriſhed during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In the courſe of its peruſal, we find that many an humorous tale, which the modern jeſter narrates as the account of circumſtances that occurred under his own obſervation, were of the number of thoſe which cauſed the walls of the *Bugiale* to re-echo with laughter. Like all collections of the kind, the *Liber Facetiarum* contains, amongſt a number of pieces of merit, ſome ſtories, in which we look in vain for the pungency of wit. When however we are inclined to condemn Poggio as guilty of the crime of chronicling a dull joke, we ſhould remember, that *bons mots* frequently borrow their intereſt from aptneſs of introduction, and an humorous mode of delivery; and that though the ſpirit of a witticiſm, which enlivened the converſation of a Luſco or a Cincio, may evaporate when it is committed to paper, yet at the time when it was recorded by Poggio, it ſported in his recollection with all the hilarity of its concomitant circumſtances. But too many of the *Facetiæ* are liable to a more ſerious objection than that of dullneſs. It is a ſtriking proof of the licentiouſneſs of the times, that an apoſtolic ſecretary who enjoyed the friendſhip and eſteem of the pontiff, ſhould have publiſhed a number of ſtories which outrage the laws of decency, and put modeſty to the bluſh; and that the dignitaries of the Roman hierarchy ſhould have tolerated a book, various paſsages of which tend not merely to expoſe the ignorance and hypocriſy of individuals

individuals of the clerical profeſsion, but to throw ridicule on the moſt ſacred ceremonies of the Catholic church. In the ſelection of the *Facetiæ*, Poggio ſeems totally to have forgotten the wholeſome advice which he had formerly beſtowed upon Antonio Beccatelli. Recanati indeed endeavours to defend his fame, by ſuggeſting the idea, that many of the moſt licentious ſtories were added to his collection by poſterior writers; and he ſupports this opinion by aſserting, that he has ſeen two manuſcript copies of the *Facetiæ*, in which many of the obnoxious paſsages in queſtion are not to be found.*(a)* The validity of this defence is however rendered extremely queſtionable by the conſideration of a fact, of which Recanati was probably ignorant, namely, that Lorenzo Valla, in the fourth book of his *Antidotus in Poggium*, which was publiſhed about the year 1452, not only impeaches the *Facetiæ* of blaſphemy and indecency; but recites, by way of holding that work up to reprobation, the moſt ſcandalous ſtories which are now to be found in the whole collection.*(b)*

It has been aſcertained by Monſieur le Grand, that a few of the ſtories which occur in the *Facetiæ*, are to be found in the *Fabliaux*, or tales, which were circulated

(a) Recanati Vita Poggii, p. xxiii.

(b) Vallæ Antidotus in Poggium, p. 227, 228, *et seq.*

in various parts of Europe, by the Provençal bards of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, whoſe ſportive effuſions of fancy, furniſhed a rich fund of materials for the poets and noveliſts of Italy and of England.(a)

The

(a) *Fablinux ou Contes du* xii. *et du* xiii. *Siecle, Fables et Romans du* xiii. *traduits ou extraits d'aprés plusieurs manuscrits du tems; avec des notes historiques et critiques, et les imitations qui ont été faites de ces contes depuis leur origine jusqu' à nos jours. Nouvelle Edition, augmentée d'une dissertation sur les Troubadours. Par. M. Le Grand. En cinq tom in* 18. *à Paris*, 1781.

For the following enumeration of the *Facetiæ* of Poggio, which appear to correſpond with ſome of the *Fabliaux*, I am indebted to the friendly diligence of the Rev. John Greſwell, maſter of the college ſchool at Mancheſter.

The firſt occurs in *tom.* i. *p.* 299 of the *Fabliaux*, entitled *La Culotte des Cordeliers*, and is, with ſome variations in the commencement, the *Braccæ Divi Francisci* of Poggio, *p.* 236, of the ſmall edition of 1798. In *vol.* iii, *p.* 107, *Le Testament de l' Ane*, is in Poggio's *Facet. p.* 45, *Canis Testamentum*. Same vol. *p.* 197, *Du Villain et de sa femme*, is in Poggio, *p.* 69, the *Mulier Demersa*, whoſe body is to be ſought for as floating againſt the current. *Vol.* iii. *p.* 201. *Du pré tondu; alias de la femme contrariante*, is the *Pertinacia Muliebris*, in the *Facetiæ*, *p.* 68. Again, *vol.* iii. *p.* 292, *Le Meunier d'Aleus*, is in Poggio the ſtory entitled *Quinque Ova*, *p.* 278, of the *Facetiæ*. *Vol.* iv, *p.* 192, *Le Villain de Bailleul, alias La femme qui fit croire à son Mari qu' il étoit mort*, is mentioned as imitated by Poggio, but reſembles his *Mortuus loquens*, *p.* 275, only at the cloſe. In Poggio, the young man perſuaded that he was dead, hearing himſelf abuſed during the proceſsion of his corpſe to burial *erecto capite, si vivus essem, sicut sum mortuus, inquit, dicerem, furcifer, te per gulam mentiri.* In *le Villain de Bailleul*, the huſband perſuaded by his wife that he is dead, Le Curé lui-même entre pour chanter ses *oremus* apres quoi il emmene la veuve dan la chambre. Pendant tout ce tems le Villain convaincu qu'il était mort, reſtait toujours ſous le drap, ſans remuer non plus qu'un cadavre. Mais entendant un certain bruit dans la chambre, et ſoulevant ſon linceul pour regarder: coquin de Pretre s'ecrie-t-il, tu dois bien remercier Dieu de ce que je ſuis mort, car ſans cela, mordie, tu perirais ici ſous le baton. *Vol.* iii, *p.* 287, *De la Bourgeoise d' Orléans, alias de la dame qui fit battre son Mari*, is

The *Liber Facetiarum* ſoon after its publication acquired a conſiderable degree of popularity, and was eagerly read not only in the native country of its author, but alſo in France, in Spain, in Germany, and in Britain.*(a)* This is by no means a ſurpriſing circumſtance. Wit and humour

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ſaid to be imitated in Poggio's *Fraus Muliebris*, *p.* 20, but with much variation. *Vol.* iv, *p.* 304, *De l' Anneau.....(Par Haisiau).* All the account of this is as follows: Quoique le grave Preſident Fauchet ait donné l' extrait de ce *Fabliau*, je n' en parlerais point ſi je n' avais à remarquer ſur celuici, comme ſur le précédent qu'il a été imité. Ou le trouve dans Vergier sous le titre de *l'Anneau de Merlin.* This is the *Annulus* which Poggio *(Facet. p.* 141) gives Philephus.

In addition to the above, *Le Médecin de Bral, aliàs le Villain dévenu Médecin, tom.* ii. *p.* 366, from which Moliere has borrowed his *Médecin malgré lui*, is in ſome parts imitated in the *Poggiana*, where an account is given of an expeditious method of clearing the ſick liſt of an hoſpital on his eſtate, by an Italian cardinal. Deguiſé en Médecin il leur declara qu' on ne pouvait les guerir qu' avec un onguent de graiſse humaine, mais des qu'il eut propoſé de tirer au ſort à qui ſerait mis dans la chaudiere, tous viderent l' hôpital. *Vol.* iii, *p.* 95. *Les deux Parasites*; (une aſsez mauvaiſe plaiſanterie) in the *Facetiæ* of Friſchlinus is attributed to Poggio, and is in his *Facetiæ*, *p.* 67, *Danthis Faceta Responsio.* When Dante was dining with Canis Scaliger, the courtiers had privately placed all the *bones* before him. Verſi omnes in ſolum Dantem, mirabantur cur ante ipſum ſolummodo oſsa conſpicerentur, tum ille, Minimè inquit mirum, ſi Canes oſsa ſua comederunt; ego autem non ſum *Canis.* Le Grand does not notice this as contained in the *Facetiæ* of Poggio; but the reſemblance is as great as between moſt of thoſe that he notices.

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 219.

The popularity of the *Facetiæ* is evinced by the number of editions through which that work has paſsed; ſeven different impreſsions of it are thus enumerated by De Bure, who erroneouſly gives to Poggio the prænomen of Franciſcus.

1. *Francisci Poggii Florentini Facetiarum Liber; editio vetustissima et ori-*

humour poſſeſs almoſt irreſiſtible charms. The idle and the diſsipated are pleaſed with a ſally of hilarity, which gives a ſtimulus to their fancy; and they who are habituated

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ginalis absque loci et anni indicatione, sed cujus in fronte apparet Epistola præfatoria Bernardi cujusdam in senium deducti ad militem Raymundum Dominum Castri Ambrosii dicata, in 4to.

De Bure conjectures, that this edition was printed at Rome by George Laver or Ulric Han, in 1470.

2. *Ejusdem Editio vetus et secunda originalis absque loci et anni indicatione ulla, sed typis Vindelini Spirensis, aut saltem Nicolai Jenson Gallici excusa Venetiis circa an. 1471, in fol.*

3. *Ejusdem. Ferrariæ, 1471, 4to.*

4. *Ejusdem Noribergi per Fredericum Creusner, 1475, in fol.*

5. *Ejusdem Mediolani per Christophorum Valdarfer, 1477, 4to.*

6. *Ejusdem Mediolani per Leonardum Pachel, et Uldrericum Scinzinzeller 1481, in 4to.*

7. *Ejusdem Facetiæ cum Laurentii Vallæ facetiis moralibus et Francisci Petrarchæ de Salibus viror. illus. ac facetiis libro, Paris. absque anni et typographi nomine sed circa annum 1477, aut saltem 1478 excusa, 4to.*

8. Poggii *Facetiæ*, 1498, in 4to. fine loci aut typographi nomine. This edition is not mentioned by De Bure, who cloſes his liſt with noticing the following tranſlations.

Les Faceties de Pogge translatées de Latin en Francois. Paris, Bonfons, 1549, 4to.

Les Comptes facétieux et joyeuses recreations du Poge Florentin, trad. du Latin en Francois. Paris, Cousturier, 1605, in 16.

A neat and correct Latin edition of the *Facetiæ* in two ſmall pocket volumes was publiſhed by a French emigrant in the year 1798. Of this edition the following is the title.

Poggii Florentini Facetiarum Libellus Unicus notulis Imitatores indicantibus et nonnullis sive Latinis, sive Gallicis Imitationibus illustratus, simul ad fidem optimarum editionum emendatus. Mileti, 1798.

ated to ſtudy, or who are fatigued by the more weighty concerns of life, are happy to enjoy an opportunity of occaſional relaxation. As a vehicle of ſentiment, a book may be conſidered as the repreſentative of its author; and in a world of anxiety and trouble, he who is endued with the happy talent of cauſing the wrinkle of care to give place to the pleaſing convulſion of mirth, will find few circles of ſociety in which he is not a welcome gueſt.

In the *Facetiæ*, Poggio aimed a moſt miſchievous thruſt at his old antagoniſt Filelfo, by making him the hero of a tale, the ridiculous oddity of which diſturbs the ſteady countenance of gravity itſelf, and cauſes the ſtricteſt ſeverity for a moment to ſmile at the indelicacy which it condemns.*(a)* In conſequence of this renewed provocation, Filelfo again invoked the ſatiric muſe. This was however the laſt onſet which took place between thoſe redoubted champions, who were ſoon afterwards reconciled to each other by the interpoſition of their common friends.

During Poggio's temporary reſidence at Terranuova, he was one day viſited by Benedetto Aretino, a civilian of diſtinguiſhed reputation; by Niccolo di Foligni, a phyſician of conſiderable eminence,*(b)* and by Carlo Aretino,

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(a) Visio Francisci Philelphi apud Poggii Opera, p. 456.

(b) An eulogium of Coſmo de' Medicis written by Niccolo of Foligni, is preſerved in the Laurentian library. *Mehi Vita Amb. Trav. tom.* i. *p.* lxxiii.

Aretino, the chancellor of the Florentine republic. Theſe gueſts Poggio hoſpitably entertained in his villa, and from the converſation which occurred after their repaſt, he collected materials for a work which he dedicated, in the
A. D. 1451. year 1451, under the title of *Hiſtoria diſceptativa convivialis*, to the cardinal Proſpero Colonna. This work conſiſts of three parts, the ſubject of the firſt of which is not a little whimſical, namely—Whether the maſter of a feaſt ought to thank his gueſts for the honour of their company, or whether the gueſts ſhould expreſs their gratitude to their hoſt for his hoſpitality. The diſcuſsion of this ſingular queſtion, does not afford any thing very intereſting. The ſecond part contains the detail of a diſpute which took place between Niccolo di Foligni and Benedetto Aretino, on the comparative dignity of their reſpective profeſsions. Niccolo pleading on behalf of the healing art, obſerves, that if antiquity can confer honour, the practice of medicine exiſted in times ſo remote, that its firſt profeſsors are enrolled amongſt the number of the Gods. He alſo maintains that the medical profeſsion muſt needs be more honourable than the profeſsion of law, ſince the doctrines of medicine are built upon the principles of ſcience, whilſt the maxims of law depend upon caprice; and that of courſe phyſicians are obliged to qualify themſelves for the diſcharge of their duty by diligent reſearches into the fixed and eſtabliſhed courſe of nature, whilſt thoſe who are eſteemed learned in the law, confine their reſearches to their profeſsional books. With regard to the civil law in particular, he reminds Benedetto,

that

that there are few ſtates which are regulated by its dictates, whereas the inhabitants of almoſt all the nations in the world pay homage to the profeſsors of the healing art, by having recourſe to their aſsiſtance. Niccolo having finiſhed his arguments, Benedetto undertakes the defence of legal ſtudies, and aſserts the high antiquity of laws, which he maintains muſt have exiſted before the practice of medicine, ſince medicine could not have been reduced to a ſcience before the aſsemblage of men in civil communities, which are held together by the bonds of law. He alſo maintains the dignity of laws, as being the concluſions of reaſon, and the ſupport of ſociety. Niccolo in reply denies that the civil law is the reſult of the concluſions of reaſon, and vilifies it as a crude collection of regulations, adopted to ſuit the exigencies of the moment, without any reference to natural law, which civilians do not ſtudy—as a maſs of opinions and not a collection of truths. Impeaching the general character of the profeſsors of law, he accuſes them of an inordinate thirſt for gain, which leads them to nouriſh ſtrife, to prolong diſcord by the tedrouſneſs of legal proceedings, and to pride themſelves on their ſucceſs in patronizing a bad cauſe. Benedetto, rouſed by theſe pointed reflections, obſerves, that it ill becomes a phyſician to treat with ſeverity the characters of the profeſsors of law; "for," ſays he, "what is more "notorious than the folly of many of your brethren, "who kill more than they cure, and build their art upon "experiments made at the riſk of their wretched patients? "The errors of lawyers are of trivial conſequence, in com-

" riſon with thoſe of phyſicians. Our unſkilfulneſs
" empties the purſes of our clients, but your miſtakes
" endanger the lives of thoſe who employ you. We
" cauſe ſomebody to be the gainer, whilſt you both rob a
" man of his life, and defraud his ſurviving relations of
" the amount of your fees. Whilſt we may poſsibly
" occaſion the loſs of a legacy or an inheritance, you
" diſturb the peace of nations by ſlaying kings and
" princes. And let me ask, what dignity is there in your
" profeſsion? you are called in to viſit a patient—you
" examine his natural diſcharges, wrinkle your brows,
" and aſsume a countenance of uncommon gravity, in
" order to perſuade the bye-ſtanders, that he is in a very
" critical ſituation. Then you feel his pulſe in order to
" aſcertain the powers of nature. After this you hold
" a conſultation and write your preſcription, in the com-
" poſition of which you are not guided by any fixed rules,
" as is plain from the different recipes which are in the
" ſame caſe recommended by different practitioners. If
" your potion happen by chance to be followed by good
" ſymptoms, you extol the cure as a marvellous effect of
" art—but if it does any miſchief, all the blame is laid on
" the poor patient. I will relate to you a curious circum-
" ſtance which happened to one Angelo, a biſhop of
" Arezzo. This eccleſiaſtic being afflicted by a very
" dangerous diſorder, was told by his phyſicians, that if
" he would not take the potions which they preſcribed,
" he would run the risk of loſing his life. He for ſome
" time poſitively refuſed to take their nauſeous draughts,

" but

" but was at length perſuaded by his friends to conform " to the inſtructions of his doctors. The phyſicians then " ſent him a number of phials, all which he emptied into " a certain utenſil which was depoſited under his bed. In " the morning the phyſicians paid him another viſit, and " finding him almoſt free from his fever, intimated to " him, that they hoped he was convinced of his folly in " having ſo long refuſed to follow their preſcriptions. To " theſe remarks he replied—the effect of your medicines " is indeed marvellous, for by merely putting them under " my bed, I have recovered my health. If I had ſwallow- " ed them, no doubt I ſhould have become immortal." *(a)* After the narration of this anecdote, Benedetto proceeds to enlarge upon the utility of laws, which he maintains to have been the foundation of the dignity of ſtates and empires. This poſition is denied by Niccolo, who aſſerts, that the dominions of monarchs and republics have conſtantly been extended by power, which is ſo incompatible with law, that the powerful and mighty univerſally deſpiſe all legal obligations, which are binding only on the poor and humble.

In the third part of the *Hiſtoria diſceptativa convivialis*, Poggio diſcuſſes the queſtion, whether the Latin language was univerſally ſpoken by the Romans, or whether

(a) The readers of Joe Miller will remember that this ſtory has, in its deſcent to modern times, received divers improvements.

whether the learned made uſe of a language different from that of the vulgar. Poggio maintains, in oppoſition to the opinion of his deceaſed friend Leonardo Aretino(a) and others, that the language uſed by the well educated Romans, was the vernacular language of their country, and that it differed from that of the lower claſſes in no other reſpect, than as the language of the well educated in every country, is more elegant and poliſhed than that of the inferior orders of the community. In defence of his opinion, he quotes a conſiderable number of curious paſſages from the Roman hiſtorians and rhetoricians, which clearly prove his point, and evince his profound acquaintance with Latin literature.

The diſcuſsion of the comparative dignity of the profeſsions of medicine and civil law, ſeems to have been publiſhed by Poggio with the deſign of holding up both thoſe profeſsions to ridicule. In the execution of this deſign he certainly manifeſts more wit than liberality. The peruſal of his dialogue may ſerve however to ſhew, that the firſt dawn of reaſon is ſufficient to detect the pompous ignorance of empirics, and to diſplay the detriment which ariſes to ſociety from thoſe moſt miſchievous of knaves, the unprincipled practitioners of the law. It muſt alſo be allowed that the enumeration which Benedetto

(a) See a long and elaborate letter of Leonardo's on this ſubject in the collection of his epiſtles publiſhed by Mehus. *Lib.* vi. *ep.* x.

Benedetto Aretino and Niccolo di Foglini, ſet forth of the merits of their reſpective profeſsions, forcibly inculcates the benefits which accrue to mankind from the ſtudy of medicine, and of juriſprudence, and the true principles upon which thoſe ſtudies ought to be conducted.*(a)* The following letter which Poggio addreſsed to his friend Benedetto, in the year 1436, demonſtrates that the reſult of his ſerious meditations, had convinced him that legal practice was not only compatible with moral rectitude, but was moſt likely to be productive of gain, when regulated by the dictates of integrity.

" I have been highly gratified, my dear Benedetto, " by your kind letter, and I cannot but admire the " verſatility of your genius, who have united to the moſt " profound knowledge of the civil law, an elegance and " grace of expreſsion, which entitles you in my opinion " to as high a rank in the ſchool of rhetoric, as you hold " among the profeſsors of the ſcience of juriſprudence. " It is indeed a proof of an extraordinary capacity, and of " a wonderful proficiency in letters, to have ſucceſsfully " cultivated two departments of knowledge, the culti- " vation of each of which is attended with no ſmall " degree

(a) It appears from the introduction to the ſecond part of the *Historia Diſcept. Conviv. (Poggii Opera, p. 37.)* that Poggio wrote two treatiſes, the one in commendation of the art of medicine, and the other in praiſe of the ſcience of law. A MS copy of the treatiſe *in laudem legum* is preſerved in the Laurentian library. *Bandini Catalogus, tom.* ii. *p.* 408.

" degree of difficulty. The acquiſition of the knowledge " of the civil law is a work of immenſe labour, on " account of the diſcordance of ſentiments which occurs " amongſt thoſe who have treated upon this ſubject, " but ſtill more on account of the almoſt endleſs volumes " written by commentators, which diſtract the minds of " their readers by the difference of opinions which they " contain, and weary them by the prolixity of their ſtyle. " Far from imbibing the neatneſs and elegance of the " old lawyers, theſe commentators, by their perplexity and " minute diſtinctions, ſhut up the road to truth. The " difficulty of attaining the graces of eloquence, is " evinced by the fact, that in all ages truly eloquent writers " are very few in number. When therefore I ſee you " endowed with both theſe accompliſhments, I congra- " tulate you on your having beſtowed your labour on " purſuits which will confer upon you both honour and " emolument. For your knowledge of the law will " beſtow upon you riches, which are the neceſsary " ſupport of human life; and the ſtudy of polite letters " will be highly ornamental to you, and will tend to im- " prove and diſplay to the beſt advantage your legal " talents.

" I would wiſh you to avoid the common error of " too many legal practitioners, who, for the ſake of " money, wreſt the law to the purpoſes of injuſtice. " It has indeed always happened, that the bad have been " more in number than the good, and the old proverb

" juſtly

" juſtly ſays, that excellence is of rare occurrence. Al-
" moſt all law ſtudents when they enter upon their pro-
" feſsion, are ſtimulated by a love of gain; and by mak-
" ing gain the object of their unremitted purſuit, they
" acquire a habit of appreciating the merits of a cauſe,
" not according to the rules of equity, but according to
" the probability of profit. When there is no proſpect
" of emolument, juſtice is diſregarded, and the richer
" client is conſidered as having the better cauſe. As
" many tradeſmen imagine, that they can make no profit
" without telling falſehoods in commendation of their
" commodities, ſo the generality of men learned in the
" law, think that they ſhall never proſper in the world if
" they ſcruple to ſubvert juſtice by perjury, and equity
" by ſophiſms. Acting on theſe principles, they do not
" endeavour to inveſtigate the true nature of a cauſe,
" but at all hazards to promote the views of the party
" who engages their ſervices by a fee. But I am per-
" ſuaded that you, who are by your excellent diſpoſition
" inſtigated no leſs by a love of virtue than by a paſsion
" for literature, will act upon different principles, and
" will eſteem nothing lawful which is diſhonourable. I
" would not however tie you down by the ſtrictneſs of
" that philoſophy which, making happineſs to conſiſt in
" virtue alone, inculcates a contempt for worldly emolu-
" ments; for thoſe who enter upon civil life, will find
" the want of many comforts. Indeed there have been
" more lovers than deſpiſers of riches amongſt philoſo-
" phers themſelves, and the advice of thoſe who exhort

" us

" us quietly to ſubmit to poverty, is rather to be praiſed " than followed; for it is truly melancholy to depend " upon the aſsiſtance of others—But you have no reaſon " to fear, that by being honeſt you will become poor. " On the contrary, by acting up to the principles of in- " tegrity, you will ſurpaſs others in wealth as well as in " dignity. It will in the end be found much more pro- " fitable to have the reputation of honeſty and juſtice, " than that of ſkilfulneſs and craft. Virtue is valued " even by the vicious, and extorts commendation from " thoſe who are unwilling to obey her precepts. It is " impoſsible in the nature of things, that he who has " eſtabliſhed his reputation for uprightneſs, ſhould not " excel others in honour, in authority, and in emolu- " ments. I would wiſh you therefore, in the firſt place, " to perſevere in the practice of virtue, then to apply " yourſelf with all diligence to the ſtudy of the law, " and laſtly, to add to theſe accompliſhments the graces " of polite learning. If you adopt this plan, you will " not be doomed to ſtruggle againſt the inconveniences of " an humble ſtation, but you will riſe through the inter- " mediate degrees of dignity, to the higheſt ſtations of " honour." *(a)*

(a) Poggii Epiſtolæ lvii. *Epiſt.* xlvii.

CHAP. XI.

DEATH of Carlo Aretino—Poggio is chosen chancellor of the Florentine republic, and one of the Priori degli arti—War between the Florentines and the king of Naples—Peace of Lodi—Death of Nicolas V.—Quarrel between Poggio and Lorenzo Valla—Poggio's dialogue de Miseria humanæ conditionis—Murder of Angelotto, cardinal of St. Mark—Poggio's translation of Lucian's Ass—His history of Florence—His death—His character—Brief account of his children.

CHAP. XI.

ON the twenty-fourth of April, 1453, a vacancy was occaſioned in the chancellorſhip of the Tuſcan republic, by the death of Carlo Aretino.(a) In this conjuncture the long eſtabliſhed literary reputation of Poggio, and the predominant intereſt of the houſe of Medici, concurred in directing to him the choice of his fellow-citizens, and he was elected to the office which had been in ſucceſsion ſo ably filled by two of his moſt intimate friends. The proſpect of the diſtinguiſhed honours which awaited him in his native province did not however ſo entirely occupy his mind, as to render him inſenſible of the ſacrifice which he made in quitting the Roman chancery, in which he had held ſituations of confidence and dignity for the ſpace of fifty-one years. His heart was depreſsed with ſorrow

April 24th, 1453.

(a) *Tiraboschi Storia della Letter. Ital. tom.* vi. *part* 2d, *p.* 329.

when he bade farewell to the pontiff, from whoſe kindneſs he had uniformly experienced the moſt friendly indulgence. It may alſo be eaſily imagined, that amongſt the aſsociates of his literary and official labours, there were ſome choſen companions of his hours of relaxation, whoſe pleaſing converſe he could not forego without yielding to the emotions of grief. But in Florence alſo he had been from his early years accuſtomed to enjoy the pleaſures of friendſhip; and the ſentiments of patriotiſm concurred with the voice of ambition in prompting him to obey the call of his country. He therefore quitted
June, 1453. the city of Rome in the month of June, 1453; and having removed his family to the Tuſcan capital, he applied himſelf with his wonted diligence to the duties of his new office.

He had not long reſided in Florence before he received an additional teſtimony of the eſteem of his fellow-citizens, in being elected into the number of the *Priori degli arti*, or preſidents of the trading companies, the eſtabliſhment of which was happily calculated to ſecure the preſervation of good order, and to defend from infringement the political privileges of the people.*(a)*

On

(a) Recanati Vita Poggii, p. xvii.—xix. The trading companies of Florence ſeem to have been conſtituted in the ſame manner as thoſe into which the citizens of London are at this day ſubdivided.

On his arrival in Florence, Poggio found his countrymen involved in the embarraſsments and diſtreſses incident to a ſtate of war. Soon after Franceſco Sforza had made himſelf maſter of the city of Milan, he had been attacked by the united forces of the Venetians and the king of Naples. The Florentines being invited to join in the alliance againſt him, had, at the inſtance of Coſmo de' Medicis, not only refuſed to take any ſhare in the confederacy, but had ſent a body of troops to his aſſiſtance. Irritated by this conduct, the Venetians and the Neapolitan king expelled from their reſpective dominions all the Tuſcans who happened to reſide there for the purpoſes of commerce. This inſult was the forerunner of hoſtilities, which were commenced in the year 1451, by the king of Naples, who ſent his ſon Ferdinando, at the head of an army of twelve thouſand men, to invade the Tuſcan territories. The Neapolitan forces made themſelves maſters of a few unimportant towns, but they were prevented by the vigilance of their adverſaries, from gaining any ſignal or permanent advantage. The war was for ſome time carried on in a languid manner, till the Florentines and the duke of Milan, having procured the aſſiſtance of Charles VII. king of France, the Venetians, after ſuſtaining great reverſes of fortune, were inclined to an accommodation; and without the concurrence of the king of Naples, they entered into a negotiation with their enemies, which was happily terminated at Lodi on the ninth of April 1454, by the ſignature of a treaty of peace. Alfonſo was greatly irritated by the defection of his

his allies, and for ſome time obſtinately perſiſted in refuſing to liſten to pacific overtures. But on the twenty-ſixth of January 1455, he was perſuaded to accede to the treaty of Lodi by the earneſt ſolicitation of Nicolas V.*(a)*

The intelligence of this happy event, diffuſed a beam of cheerfulneſs over the latter days of that benevolent pontiff, who had for a long ſpace of time ſtruggled with a complication of painful diſorders. In the midſt of his ſufferings however he did not remit his endeavours to promote the welfare of Chriſtendom. He was buſily employed in making preparations to ſend ſuccour to the Greeks, who were ſinking beneath the power of the Turks, when he terminated his career of glory on the 24th of March 1455.*(b)*

March 24th, 1455.

Nicolas V. was one of the brighteſt ornaments of the pontifical throne. In the exerciſe of authority over the eccleſiaſtical dominions, he exhibited a happy union of the virtues of gentleneſs and firmneſs. Purely diſintereſted in his views, he did not laviſh upon his relatives the wealth which the prudent adminiſtration of his finances poured into his coffers; but appropriated the revenues of the church to the promotion of its dignity. The gorgeous ſolemnity

(a) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 456.

(b) *Muratori Annali, tom.* ix. *p.* 456.

ſolemnity which graced his performance of religious rites, evinced his attention to decorum and the grandeur of his taſte. In the ſuperb edifices which were erected under his auſpices, the admiring ſpectator beheld the revival of ancient magnificence. As the founder of the Vatican library he claims the homage of the lovers of claſsic literature. His court was the reſort of the learned, who found in him a diſcriminating patron, and a generous benefactor. It was the ſubject of general regret, that the brief term of his pontificate prevented the maturing of the mighty plans which he had conceived for the encouragement of the liberal arts. When his lifeleſs remains were conſigned to the grave, the friends of peace lamented the premature fate of a pontiff, who had aſsiduouſly laboured to ſecure the tranquillity of Italy; and they who were ſenſible of the charms of enlightened piety, regretted the loſs of a true father of the faithful, who had dedicated his ſplendid talents to the promotion of the temporal as well as the ſpiritual welfare of the Chriſtian community

Had Poggio by his intercourſe with Nicolas V. imbibed a portion of the meekneſs of ſpirit which influenced the conduct of that amiable patron of literature, he would have provided for his preſent comfort and for his future fame. But he unfortunately indulged to the lateſt period of his life, that bitterneſs of reſentment, and that intemperance of language, which diſgraced his ſtrictures on Franceſco Filelfo. When he quitted the Roman chancery, he did not depart in peace with all his colleagues.

At

At the time of his removal to Florence he was engaged in the violence of literary hoſtility againſt the celebrated Lorenzo Valla. In Lorenzo he had to contend with a champion of no inferior fame—a champion whoſe dexterity in controverſy had been encreaſed by frequent exerciſe. This zealous diſputant was the ſon of a doctor of civil law, and was born at Rome towards the end of the fourteenth century.(a) He was educated in his native city, and when he had attained the age of twenty-four years, he offered himſelf as a candidate for the office of apoſtolic ſecretary, which as he himſelf aſſerts, he was prevented from obtaining, by the intrigues of Poggio.(b) Quitting Rome in conſequence of his diſappointment, he repaired to Piacenza for the purpoſe of receiving an inheritance which had devolved to him on the recent death of his grandfather and his uncle.(c) From Piacenza he removed to Pavia, in the univerſity of which city he for ſome

(a) *Tiraboſchi Storia della letter. Ital. tom.* vi. *p.* ii. *p.* 308. If credit may be given to Valla's own aſſertion, his introduction into the world was announced in a ſupernatural manner. He boaſts in his *Antidotus, p.* 191, that his mother, being ignorant that ſhe was pregnant, was apprized of that circumſtance by the interpoſition of an oracle, which informed her that ſhe would be brought to bed of a ſon, and gave particular directions with reſpect to her offspring's name. It might be reaſonably conjectured that this oracle was ſome experienced matron; but by the ſubſequent part of Valla's narration, it ſeems that the important admonition in queſtion, proceeded from one of the ſaints.

(b) *Vallæ Antidotus in Poggium, p.* 200.

(c) *Ibid. p.* 201.

ſome time read lectures on rhetoric.*(a)* The hiſtory of the tranſactions in which he was engaged immediately after his removal from Pavia, is involved in conſiderable obſcurity. But it is clearly aſcertained, that about the year 1435, he was honoured by the patronage of Alfonſo, king of Naples, whom he appears to have accompanied in his warlike expeditions. Soon after the tranſlation of the pontifical court from Florence to Rome in the year 1443, Valla returned to his native city. His reſidence in Rome was not, however, of long continuance. About the time of the diſſolution of the council of Florence, he had written a treatiſe to prove the erroneouſneſs of the commonly received opinion, that the city of Rome had been preſented to the ſovereign pontiffs by the emperor Conſtantine.*(b)* The officious malice of ſome fiery zealots having apprized Eugenius IV. of the nature and object of this treatiſe, the wrath of that pontiff was kindled againſt its author, who, being obliged to fly from the rage of religious bigotry, took refuge in Naples, where he was kindly received by his royal protector.

During his reſidence in Naples, Valla delivered public lectures on eloquence, which were attended by crowded

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(a) Vallæ Antidotus in Poggium, p. 201.

(b) This treatiſe is printed in the firſt volume of the *Fasciculus Rer. expet. et fugiend.*

audiences. But the imprudence of his zeal in the correction of vulgar errors in matters of theological belief, again involved him in dangers and difficulties. He appears to have poſſeſſed that ſuperiority of intellect above his contemporaries, which, when united to a warm temper and a propenſity to diſputation, never fails to draw down upon the inquiſitive the hatred of fanaticiſm. In the pride of ſuperior knowledge, he provoked the indignation of the biſhop of Majorca, by aſſerting, that the pretended letter of Chriſt to Abgarus was a forgery.*(a)* In aggravation of this hereſy, he had moreover derided the aſſertion of a preaching friar, who had inculcated upon his audience the commonly received notion, that the formulary of faith, generally known by the name of the apoſtle's creed, was the joint compoſition of thoſe firſt heralds of ſalvation.*(b)* The freedom with which he deſcanted upon theſe delicate topics of diſpute, expoſed him to the utmoſt peril. His enemies publicly arraigned him before a ſpiritual tribunal, where he underwent a ſtrict examination; and it is very probable, that had not Alfonſo interpoſed the royal authority on his behalf, not even a recantation of his imputed errors, would have ſaved him from the ſevere puniſhment which the atrocity of religious bigotry has allotted to thoſe who deviate from the narrow line of orthodox faith.*(c)*

Theology

(a) Vallæ Antidotus, p. 210.

(b) Ibid. p. 211.

(c) See the account given of his tranſaction by Valla in his *Antidotus, p.* 218.

Theology was not the only ſubject of inveſtigation which involved Valla in altercation and ſtrife. Literary jealouſy kindled the flame of hoſtility between him and Beccatelli, whom he attacked in a violent invective. With Bartolomeo Facio alſo he maintained a controverſy, in the courſe of which he manifeſted the utmoſt bitterneſs of ſpirit.*(a)*

When Nicolas V. had aſcended the papal throne, Valla received from that liberally-minded pontiff, an invitation to fix his reſidence in Rome. He accordingly repaired to the pontifical court, where he was honourably received, and employed in tranſlating the Greek authors into the Latin tongue.*(b)* Soon after his arrival in Rome, the following circumſtance gave riſe to the irreconcileable enmity which took place between him and

Poggio towards the concluſion of his third invective, aſſerts, that Valla was on this occaſion ſubjected to the diſcipline of the ſcourge, and narrates the manner and form of his puniſhment with great minuteneſs.

(a) Valla's invective againſt Beccatelli and Facio is divided into four books, and occupies fifty-two pages of the edition of his works, publiſhed by Aſcenſius in folio, an. 1528.

(b) Valla triumphantly boaſts *(Antidotus, p. 167)* that Nicolas V. preſented to him with his own hand, five hundred gold crowns as a remuneration for his Latin verſion of Thucydides. This verſion was printed by Henry Stephens, in his edition of that author, in the preface to which he complains of Valla's inaccuracy and inelegance of ſtyle. That this complaint is juſt, abundant proof may be found in Stephens's marginal corrections of Valla's tranſlation.

Poggio. A Catalonian nobleman, a pupil of Valla, happened to be poſſeſſed of a copy of Poggio's epiſtles. This book having fallen into Poggio's hands, he obſerved on its margin ſeveral annotations, pointing out alleged barbariſms in his ſtyle. Fired with indignation at this attack upon his Latinity, and precipitately concluding that the author of theſe criticiſms could be no other than Valla himſelf, whoſe *Libri Elegantiarum Linguæ Latinæ* had gained him the reputation of an acute grammarian, he had immediate recourſe to his accuſtomed mode of revenge, and aſsailed the ſuppoſed delinquent in a fierce invective. In this work he accuſed Valla of the moſt offenſive arrogance, which, as he aſserted, was manifeſted in his animadverſions on the ſtyle of the beſt claſsic authors. Poggio then proceeded to examine and to defend the paſsages which had been noted with reprobation in the young Catalonian's copy of his epiſtles. Collecting courage as he proceeded, he arraigned at the bar of critical juſtice, ſeveral forms of expreſsion which occur in Valla's *Elegantiæ*. Alluding to Valla's transactions in the court of Naples, he impeached him of hereſy both in religion and philoſophy, and concluded his ſtrictures by the ſketch of a ridiculous triumphal proceſsion, which, as he aſserted, would well befit the vanity and folly of his antagoniſt.*(a)*

In

(a) Poggii Opera, p. 188—205.

In the courſe of a little time after the publication of this invective, Valla addreſsed to Nicolas V. an anſwer to it under the title of *Antidotus in Poggium*. In the introduction to this defence of himſelf, he aſserted, that Poggio had been ſtimulated to attack him by envy of the favourable reception which his *Elegantiæ* had received from the public. Adverting to the advanced age of his opponent, he addreſsed to him a long and grave admonition on the acerbity of his language. After a ſufficient quantity of additional preliminary obſervations, Valla proceeded to rebut the charge which Poggio had brought againſt him. He aſserted, that the critic, who had given ſuch offence to the irritable ſecretary, was the above-mentioned Catalonian nobleman, who, taking umbrage at an expreſsion derogatory to the taſte of his countrymen, which occurred in one of Poggio's epiſtles, had avenged himſelf by making ſome curſory ſtrictures on his ſtyle.*(a)* By ſhowing that the criticiſms in queſtion by no means agreed with the principles inculcated in his *Elegantiæ*, and by other internal evidence,*(b)* Valla proved almoſt to

(a) The paſſage which thus irritated the feelings of the Catalonian nobleman, occurs in Poggio's epiſtle to Andreolo Giuſtiniano, in which he remarks, upon the aſsertion of Franceſco di Piſtois, that ſome Catalans had ſtolen a marble ſtatue which he had in charge to deliver to Poggio: "in quo ut conjicio mani-"feſte mentitus fuit. Non enim marmoris ſculpti Cathalani cupidi ſunt, ſed "auri et ſervorum quibus ad remigium utantur."

Poggii Opera, p. 329.

(b) From the following curious annotation which Poggio ſubjoined to the young critic's ſtrictures, it ſhould ſeem, that on his firſt peruſal of them, he

to demonſtration, that he himſelf had no part in the animadverſions which had excited ſo much animoſity. Having thus repelled the imputation of a wanton and infidious aggreſsion, he proceeded to ſhew, that he had not abſtained from criticiſing the works of Poggio on account of their freedom from faults, by entering upon a moſt minute and rigid examination of their phraſeology; an examination in which he gave ample proof how acute is the eye of enmity, and how peculiarly well qualified a rival is to diſcover the errors of his competitor.

Had Valla in his *Antidotus* reſtrained himſelf within the limits of ſelf-defence, he would have gained the praiſe due to the exerciſe of the virtue of forbearance: had he proceeded no farther in offenſive operations than to impugn the ſtyle of his opponent, he would have been juſtified in the opinion of mankind in general, as exerciſing the right of retaliation. But by attacking the moral character of Poggio, *(b)* he imprudently rouſed in the fiery boſom

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aſcribed them to their true author. " Tu baſtarde impure novus perfidiâ, ſi " non deterior es magiſtro, ſtultitiæ indolem præfers. Corrige teipſum et mores " tuos, et ſatis erit tibi difficilis provincia. Ingenium tuum male compoſitum " eſt, et magiſtri tui inſanum ac jactabundum, redundans ſtultitiâ tibi ſoli qui " nihil noſti ignotâ. Et ſi tu aſſellus eſſes alterius ætatis, ego te exciperem " ſatis opulenter."

Vallæ Antidotus, p. 46.

(b) This attack on Poggio's moral character occurs in the proemium to the *Antidotus*, and is couched in the following atrocious terms. " Offendam itaque " eum quaſi alterum Regulum, malum quidem virum, non quod libidinoſus ac " prope libidinis profeſſor, non quod adulter atque adeo alienarum uxorum

boſom of his adverſary, the fierceneſs of implacable reſentment, and provoked him to open wide the floodgates of abuſe. In a ſecond invective Poggio maintained, that if it were true that the Catalonian youth wrote the remarks which were the ſubject of his complaint, he wrote them under the direction of Valla. Indignantly repelling the charge of envy, he remarked, that ſo notorious a fool as Valla, the object of contempt to all the learned men of Italy, could not poſsibly excite that paſsion. After noticing the imprudence of his antagoniſt in provoking an inquiry into his own moral character, he proceeded circumſtantially to relate divers anecdotes, which tended to fix upon Valla the complicated guilt of forgery, *(a)* theft, ebriety, and every ſpecies of lewdneſs. Recurring

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" præreptor, non quod vinolentus ſemper ac potius temulentus, non quod fal-
" ſarius et quidem convictus, non quod avarus, ſacrilegus, perjurus, corruptor,
" ſpurcus, aliaque quæ extra noſtram cauſam ſunt, ſed quatenus ad cauſam
" noſtram facit, quod manifeſtarius calumniator." *Antidotus, p.* 8.

(a) He aſſerted, that during Valla's reſidence at Pavia, he forged a receipt in order to evade the payment of a ſum of money which he had borrowed, and that by way of puniſhment for this offence, he was expoſed to public view with a mitre of paper upon his head. Poggio in his relation of this anecdote, made uſe of the following ironical expreſsion. " Falſum chirographum cum
" ſcripſiſſes, accuſatus, convictus, damnatus, ante tempus legitimum absque
" ullâ diſpenſatione epiſcopus factus es." This witticiſm of Poggio's betrayed Monſieur L'Enfant into a very ridiculous error. " On trouve ici," ſays he, in gravely commenting on this paſsage, " une particularité aſsez curieuſe de la
" vie de Laurent Valle. C'eſt qu'ayant été ordonné Eveque à Pavie ayant
" l'age et ſans diſpenſe, il quitta de lui même la mitre, et la depoſa, en attend-
" ant dans le palais epiſcopal, où elle étoit encore. Je rapporterai ſes paroles

Recurring to the charge of hereſy, he referred to various paſsages in Valla's writings, which contained ſentiments contradictory to the orthodox faith. In fine, he arraigned the ſuppoſed infidel before an imaginary tribunal, which he repreſented as without mercy condemning him to the infernal regions.

In reply to this ſecond attack, Valla renewed and maintained his proteſtation, that he had not been the aggreſsor in the preſent conteſt. In contradiction to Poggio's aſsertion, that he was an object of diſlike to the ſcholars of Italy, he quoted ſeveral complimentary epiſtles which he had on various occaſions received from men diſtinguiſhed by their learning. He alſo expoſed the diſingenuouſneſs of his adverſary, who had branded him with the imputation of hereſy, on the ground of certain ſentiments, which did indeed occur in his works, but which he had advanced, not in his own character, but in that of an Epicurean philoſopher, whom he had introduced as an interlocutor in a dialogue. As to the ſcandalous ſtories which Poggio had related to the diſparagement of his good name, he ſolemnly aſserted, that the greater part of them had not the leaſt foundation in truth; and that the remainder were groſs and wilful miſrepreſentations of facts;

" en Latin qui ſont fort embrouillées." *Poggiana, tom.* i. *p.* 212. On this ſtatement of L'Enfant, Recanati, in his *Osservazioni, p.* 111, makes the following dry remark. " Non credo però, che l'autore della Poggiana, quando pure " foſse Cattolico, vorrebbe eſsere fatto *Vescovo* in queſta foggia, come Poggio " dice che il Valla lo ſia ſtato."

facts;*(a)* and in the true ſpirit of retaliation, he narrated concerning Poggio, a number of anecdotes equally ſcandalous, and in all probability equally falſe, as thoſe of the circulation of which he himſelf complained. On the publication of this ſecond part of the *Antidotus*, Poggio, returning to the charge, annoyed his foe in a third invective, in which, purſuing the idea of Valla's having been condemned to the infernal regions, he accounted for his appearance on earth, by informing his readers, that on the culprit's arrival in hell, a council of demons was ſummoned to decide upon his caſe; and that in conſideration of the eſſential wickedneſs of his character, they had permitted him, after ſolemnly ſwearing allegiance to Satan, to return to earth for the purpoſe of gratifying his malevolent diſpoſitions, by effecting the perdition of others.*(b)*

Before Valla had ſeen this narration of his tranſactions in the kingdom of darkneſs, he was provoked by the

(a) To enter into the particulars of Poggio's charges and Valla's defence, would be a moſt diſguſting taſk. The following circumſtance is, however, too curious to be paſſed over without notice. Poggio reprobating the incontinence of his adverſary, accuſed him of debauching his ſiſter's maid-ſervant. In reply to this accuſation, Valla did not deny the fact; but with wonderful ingenuity thus converted it into a proof of his principled chaſtity. "Itaque cum non-"nulli meorum propinquorum me virginem, ſive frigidioris naturæ, et ob id "non idoneum conjugio arbitrarentur, quorum unus erat vir ſororis, quodam-"modo experiri cupiebant. Volui itaque eis oſtendere, id quod facerem, non "vitium eſſe corporis, ſed animi virtutem." *Antidotus, p.* 222.

(b) Poggii Opera, p. 234—242.

account which he had received of its tenour, to proſecute his criticiſms on Poggio's phraſeology. Theſe criticiſms ſtimulated Poggio to renew hoſtilities in a fourth and a fifth invective. The former of theſe compoſitions has not yet been committed to the preſs. The latter abounds in thoſe flowers of eloquence, of which ſpecimens perhaps more than ſufficiently ample, have been already preſented to the reader.

The heat of this altercation between Poggio and Valla, was inflamed by the interference of Niccolo Perotti, a pupil of the latter, who attacked Poggio with great virulence. Poggio was not tardy in replying to this new antagoniſt. If we may judge of the nature of his invective againſt Perotti, by a ſhort extract from it, which occurs in Bandini's catalogue of the manuſcripts of the Laurentian library, it was not at all inferior in acrimony to his other compoſitions of a ſimilar nature.*(a)* A friendly and ſenſible letter of admonition which Franceſco Filelfo addreſsed to the belligerent parties, exhorting them to conſult for their own dignity by ceaſing to perſecute each other with obloquy, is a memorable inſtance how much eaſier it is to give wholeſome advice than to ſet a good example.*(b)*

The

(a) Bandini Catalogus.

(b) Filelfi Opera, p. 75. On the death of the duke of Milan, Filelfo had experienced conſiderable inconvenience, in conſequence of the war between Franceſco Sforza, and the Milaneſe. In the courſe of this conteſt he wavered between the two parties, but the ſucceſs of Sforza at length attached him to the intereſts of that enterprifing chieftain. Soon after the elevation of Nicolas V. to

The foregoing traits of the hiſtory of literature, moſt deciſively contradict the doctrine of the amiable Ovid, when he aſſerts,

—" Ingenuas didiciſſe fideliter artes
" Emollit mores nec ſinit eſſe feros."

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the pontificate, Filelfo was invited by Alfonſo king of Naples, to preſent to him in perſon, a copy of his ſatires. On his way to Naples he paſsed through Rome, where he paid his reſpects to the pontiff, who endeavoured, but in vain, to retain him in his ſervice by the promiſe of a liberal ſtipend. On his arrival at the Neapolitan capital, he was received with great kindneſs by Alfonſo, at whoſe command he was crowned with laurel in the midſt of the camp. From Naples he returned to Milan, where he received the afflicting intelligence, that at the ſack of Conſtantinople by the Turks, Manfredina Doria, his mother-in-law, and two of her daughters, had been carried away captives. It is an aſtoniſhing inſtance of the power of ſong, that he procured their redemption by an ode addreſsed to Mahomet II. In the year 1454, he was reconciled to Coſmo de' Medici, by whoſe ſon Piero he was treated with diſtinguiſhed regard. During the life of Franceſco Sforza, Filelfo was enabled by the munificence of that prince, to live in a ſtate of ſplendor which was very congenial to his diſpoſitions, but on the death of that generous patron he received from his ſucceſsor Galeazzo Maria, little more than empty promiſes. In conſequence of the preſsure of diſtreſs, he undertook at the age of ſeventy two, to read lectures on Ariſtotle. After ſuſtaining a variety of afflictions in conſequence of the diſtracted ſtate into which Milan was thrown by the death of Galeazzo, he received from Lorenzo de'Medici, an invitation to read lectures on the Greek language at Florence. This invitation he gladly accepted, and at the advanced age of eighty three he repaired to the Tuſcan capital, for the purpoſe of reſuming the taſk of public inſtruction. The fatigues of his journey however overpowered the ſtrength of his conſtitution, and ſoon after his arrival in Florence, he cloſed a life of aſsiduous ſtudy, and of almoſt ceaſeleſs turbulence.

For an elaborate hiſtory of Filelfo, ſee *Memoires de l' Academie des Inſcriptions. Tom.* x.

It is indeed a moſt lamentable truth, that few quarrels are more violent or implacable than thoſe which are excited by the jealouſy of literary rivalſhip, and that the bittereſt vituperative language on record, occurs in the controverſial writings of diſtinguiſhed ſcholars. Several cauſes concur in producing this unhappy effect. It is of the very eſsence of extraordinary talents to advance to extremes. In men whoſe ardent minds glow with the temperature of genius, whether the flame be kindled by the ſcintillation of love or of enmity, it burns with impetuous fury. The exiſtence of many ſcholars, and the happineſs of the great majority of the cultivators of literature, depend upon the eſtimation in which they are held by the public. Any aſsertion or inſinuation therefore, derogatory to their talents or acquirements, they conſider as a dangerous infringement upon their deareſt intereſts, which the ſtrong principle of ſelf-preſervation urges them to reſent. The objects upon which we employ a conſiderable portion of our time and labour, acquire in our eſtimation an undue degree of importance. Hence it happens, that too many ſcholars, imagining that all valuable knowledge centers in ſome ſingle ſubject of ſtudy, to which they have excluſively devoted their attention, indulge the ſpirit of pride, and arrogantly claim from the public a degree of deference, which is by no means due to the moſt ſucceſsful cultivator of any ſingle department of ſcience or of literature. And in the literary, as well as in the commercial world, undue demands are reſentfully reſiſted; and amongſt ſcholars as amongſt men

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of the world, pride produces diſcord. Learned men are alſo too frequently ſurrounded by officious friends, whoſe ignorant enthuſiaſm of attachment, betrays them into a kind of idolatry, which is productive of the moſt miſchievous conſequences to its object. They who are accuſtomed to meet with a blind and ready acquieſcence in their opinions, in the obſequious circle of their partizans, become impatient of contradiction, and give way to the impulſe of anger, when any one preſumes to put their dogmas to the teſt of unreſerved examination. The flame of reſentment is fanned by the fooliſh partiality by which it was originally kindled; and the nobleſt energies of ſome mighty mind, are perverted to the maintenance of ſtrife, and the infliction of pain. The operation of theſe cauſes produces many ſtriking proofs, that learning and wiſdom are by no means identical, and that the interpreter of the ſublimeſt morals, may become the miſerable victim of the meaneſt paſsions which rankle in the human breaſt.

In the inaugural oration which Poggio addreſsed to Nicolas V. he intimated, that it was his earneſt deſire to dedicate his declining years to literary purſuits. This was not a mere profeſsion. In the midſt of the multiplicity of buſineſs which devolved upon him in the diſcharge of his duty as ſecretary to the Florentine republic, he continued to proſecute his ſtudies with his accuſtomed ardour. The firſt fruits of his lucubrations after his final ſettlement in the Tuſcan capital, appeared in a dialogue *De Miseriâ humanæ conditionis*, or, on the wretchedneſs incident to

to humanity, which he dedicated to Sigiſmundo Malateſta, Lord of Rimini, and commander in chief of the Florentine forces. In this dialogue, Poggio propoſed to relate the ſubſtance of a converſation which took place between the accompliſhed Matteo Palmerio,*(a)* Coſmo de' Medici, and himſelf, in conſequence of the ſerious reflections which occurred to ſome of Coſmo's gueſts on the intelligence of the capture of Conſtantinople by the Turks. Almoſt every ſpecies of diſtreſs, which awaits the ſons of men, paſses in review in the courſe of this work. Here the dark ſide of human life is induſtriouſly diſplayed, and the ſerious leſsons of humility and ſelf-diſcipline, are inculcated in a feeling and forcible manner. But even in this grave diſquiſition, Poggio could not refrain from exerciſing his wonted ſeverity upon the aſcetics and coenobites who had ſo often ſmarted under the mercileſs laſhes of his ſatire.*(b)*

This dialogue contains a record of the miſerable end of

(a) Matteo Palmerio was a Florentine citizen, deſcended from an illuſtrious family. Paſsing through the different gradations of civic honours, he was at length called to fill the higheſt offices of the ſtate. He was an elegant ſcholar, and compoſed many works, amongſt which the moſt diſtinguiſhed was an Italian poem in terza rima, entitled *Città di vita*. This poem, in which are recounted the adventures of a human ſoul, which the author ſuppoſes to have been liberated from the priſon of the body, was condemned by the inquiſition as heretical.

Zeno Diss. Voss. tom. i. *p.* 100 *et seq.*

(b) Poggii Opera, p. 86—131.

of Angelotto, cardinal of St. Mark. This avaricious eccleſiaſtic was murdered by one of his own domeſtics, who was tempted to perpetrate this execrable deed by the hope of plundering his maſter's hoarded treaſures. When the aſsaſsin imagined that he had accompliſhed his purpoſe, he left the chamber, where the cardinal lay weltering in his blood, and called aloud for aſsiſtance. The relations and ſervants of Angelotto immediately crowded into the apartment accompanied by the murderer, who, affecting to be overwhelmed with grief, took his ſtation at the window. He was however not a little ſtartled on obſerving, that in his trepidation he had not completely effected his wicked intentions. The cardinal ſtill breathed, and, though unable to ſpeak, he pointed to the aſsaſsin. The villain endeavoured to divert the attention of the bye-ſtanders from the true meaning of this ſign, by exclaiming, " See! he intimates that the " murderer came into the houſe through this window." This ingenious interpretation of his dying maſter's geſtures, did not however avert from him the puniſhment due to his crime. He was arreſted and tried, and after having made a full confeſsion of his guilt, he expiated his offence by the forfeit of his life.*(a)*

Soon after the publication of his dialogue *De Miseriâ humanæ conditionis*, Poggio tranſmitted to Coſmo de' Medici

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(a) Poggiana, tom. ii. *p.* 162.

Medici a verſion of Lucian's *Aſs*, on which he had beſtowed a few of his days of leiſure. By the circulation of this verſion he wiſhed to eſtabliſh a point of literary hiſtory, which ſeems to have been till then unknown, namely, that Apuleius was indebted to Lucian for the ſtamina of his *Aſinus Aureus*. It is a ſufficient proof of the merit of Poggio's tranſlation of Lucian's romance, that Bourdaloue has adopted it in his edition of the works of that entertaining author.

The laſt literary work which exerciſed the talents of Poggio was his Hiſtory of Florence, a work, for the compoſition of which he was peculiarly well qualified, not only by his ſkill in the Latin language, but alſo on account of the means of information which were afforded to him by the office which he held in the adminiſtration of the civil affairs of the Florentine republic. This hiſtory, which is divided into eight books, comprehends a moſt important and intereſting portion of the annals of Tuſcan independence, embracing the events in which the Florentines bore a ſhare, from the period of the firſt war which they waged with Giovanni Viſconti, in the year 1350, to the peace of Naples, which took place in 1455. It has been juſtly obſerved, that in his *Hiſtoria Florentina*, Poggio aims at higher praiſe than that of a mere chronicler of facts, and that he enlivens his narrative by the graces of oratory. In imitation of the ancient hiſtorians, he frequently explains the cauſes and the ſecret ſprings of actions, by the medium

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of deliberative ſpeeches, which he imputes to the principal actors in the ſcenes which he deſcribes. His ſtatement of facts is clear and preciſe; in the delineation of character, which is an important and difficult part of the duty of the hiſtorian, he evinces penetration of judgment and ſkill in diſcrimination. Though the extent of territory to the hiſtory of which his narration is confined, be circumſcribed by very narrow limits, his work is by no means deſtitute of the intereſt which ariſes from the deſcription of protracted ſieges, bold achievements, and bloody encounters. He has been accuſed of ſuffering his partiality to his native country, to betray him into occaſional palliations of the injuſtice of his fellow citizens, and into falſe imputations againſt their enemies. This accuſation has been briefly couched in the following epigram, written by the celebrated Sannazaro.

" Dum patriam laudat, damnat dum Poggius hoſtem,
" Nec malus eſt civis, nec bonus hiſtoricus."

It may however be remarked, that ſuppoſing this accuſation to be ſupported by unequivocal evidence, the advocate of Poggio might plead in his excuſe the general frailty of human nature, which renders it almoſt impoſſible for a man to diveſt himſelf of an overweening affection for the land of his nativity. But it muſt be obſerved, that the impeachment in queſtion is founded upon a very few paſsages in the Hiſtory of Florence, and that it comes from a ſuſpicious quarter—from the citizens of thoſe ſtates,

the political conduct of which Poggio marks with diſapprobation.

Poggio's Hiſtory of Florence was tranſlated into Italian by his ſon Jacopo. This verſion being committed to the preſs, for a long ſpace of time ſuperſeded the original, which was confined to the precincts of the Mediceah library, till the year 1415, at which period Giovanni Battiſta Recanati, a noble Venetian, publiſhed it in a ſplendid form, and enriched it with judicious notes, and with a life of Poggio, the accuracy of which cauſes the ſtudent of literary hiſtory to lament its brevity. *(a)*

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The conſideration of the great extent of the Hiſtory of Florence, places in a ſtriking point of view the induſtry and courage of its author, who, in defiance of the infirmities of old age, poſſeſſed the energy of mind to meditate, and the diligence to execute a work of ſuch magnitude. Before however it had received the laſt poliſh, the earthly labours of Poggio were terminated by his death. This event occurred on the 30th of October, 1459. On the ſecond of November enſuing, his remains were interred with ſolemn magnificence in the church of Santa Croce in Florence.

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(a) Poggio's Hiſtory of Florence as edited by Recanati, has been republiſhed in the magnificent hiſtorical collections of Grævius and Muratori.

The reſpect which the adminiſtrators of the Tuſcan government entertained for the virtues of Poggio, induced them readily to comply with the pious wiſhes of his ſons,*(a)* who requeſted permiſſion to depoſit his portrait,

(a) By his wife, Poggio had five ſons; Pietro Paulo, Giovanni Battiſta, Jacopo, Giovanni Franceſco, and Filippo. Pietro Paulo was born in the year 1438. He entered into the fraternity of the Dominicans, and was promoted to the honourable office of Prior of Santa Maria ad Minervam, in Rome, which office he held till the time of his death, which happened September 6th, 1464.

Giovanni Battiſta, who was born in the year 1439, took the degree of doctor of civil and canon law, and attained the ſeveral dignities of Canonico of Florence, and of Arezzo, Rector of the Lateran church, Acolyte of the pontiff, and aſſiſtant clerk of the chamber. He compoſed in the Latin language the lives of Niccolo Piccinino, and Dominico Capranica, cardinal of Firmiano. He died, anno 1570.

Jacopo, born anno 1441, was the only one of Poggio's ſons who did not enter into the eccleſiaſtical profeſſion. He was a ſcholar of diſtinguiſhed accompliſhments. His Italian tranſlation of his father's Hiſtory of Florence, and of his Latin verſion of the Cyropædia, have been already noticed. He alſo tranſlated into Italian, the lives of four of the Roman emperors. Nor did he confine his literary exertions to tranſlations. He compoſed a commentary on Petrarca's Triumph of Fame, which he dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici; a treatiſe on the origin of the War between the Engliſh and the French; and the life of Filippo Scolario, vulgarly called Pipo Spano. Entering into the ſervice of cardinal Riario, he was involved in the guilt of the Pazzi conſpiracy, and was of the number of the criminals who were ſuſpended from the windows of the town hall of Florence, in the year 1478.

Giovanni Franceſco, who was born, anno 1447, after holding the offices of Canonico of Florence, and Rector of the Lateran church, went to Rome, where he became chamberlain of the pontiff, and abbreviator of the apoſtolic epiſtles. He was highly eſteemed by Leo X. who appointed him his ſecretary, in the en-

painted by Antonio Pollaiuolo, in a public hall denominated the Proconſolo. His fellow citizens alſo teſtified their grateful ſenſe of the honour which his great accompliſhments had reflected on his country, by erecting a ſtatue to his memory, on the front of the church of Santa Maria del Fiore.*(a)*

It was with juſtice that the Florentines held the name of Poggio in reſpectful remembrance. Inſpired by a zealous love of his country, he had conſtantly prided himſelf upon the honour of being a citizen of a free ſtate, and he neglected no opportunity which preſented itſelf, of encreaſing and diſplaying the glory of the Tuſcan republic. And this end he moſt effectually promoted by the ſplendour of his own accompliſhments. He ſo faithfully improved the advantages which he enjoyed in the courſe of his education

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joyment of which office he died at Rome, July 25th, 1522, and was buried in the church of St. Gregory, where there ſtill exiſts a monument erected to his memory.

Filippo was born, anno 1450. When he had attained the twentieth year of his age, he was created Canonico of Florence. But quitting the eccleſiaſtical life, he married a lady of an illuſtrious family, by whom he had three daughters.

Beſides theſe five ſons, Poggio had a daughter, named Lucretia.

(a) The fate of this ſtatue was ſomewhat remarkable. In conſequence of certain alterations made in the façade of the church of Santa Maria, in the year 1560, by Franceſco, Grand duke of Tuſcany, it was removed to another part of that edifice, where it now compoſes one of the group of the twelve apoſtles. *Recanati Vita Poggii, p.* xxxiv.

cation in the Florentine univerſity, that amongſt the multitudes of learned men who adorned his age, he occupied a ſtation of the higheſt eminence. His admiſsion into the Roman chancery, and his continuance in offices of confidence under eight ſucceſsive pontiffs, afford an ample proof, not only of his ability in buſineſs, but alſo of his fidelity and integrity. Honoured by the favour of the great, he did not ſacrifice his independence at the ſhrine of power, but uniformly maintained the ingenuous ſentiments of freedom. The whole tenour of his writings evinces, that he united to the accompliſhments of literature, an intimate knowledge of the world; and many paſsages might be quoted from his works, to prove that the eye of his mind ſurveyed a wider intellectual horizon, than fell to the general lot of the age in which he lived. He was warm and enthuſiaſtic in his friendly attachments, and was duteouſly eager to diffuſe the renown of thoſe whom he loved—But acute ſenſations are not productive of ſignal virtues alone; they too frequently betray mankind into capital errors. Poggio was as energetic in the expreſsion of reſentment as he was enthuſiaſtic in the teſtimonies of his eſteem. The licentiouſneſs which diſgraced the early part of his life, and the indecent levity which occurs in ſome of his writings, are rather the vices of the times than of the man. Thoſe circumſtances did not deprive him of the countenance of the greateſt eccleſiaſtical dignitaries—they did not cauſe him to forfeit the favour of the pious Eugenius, or of the moral and accompliſhed Nicolas V. He ſeems indeed to have recommended himſelf

himſelf to moſt of thoſe with whom he maintained a perſonal intercourſe, by the urbanity of his manners, by the ſtrength of his judgment, and by the ſportiveneſs of his wit.

As a ſcholar, Poggio is entitled to diſtinguiſhed praiſe. By aſſiduous ſtudy he made a conſiderable proficiency in the Greek language, and became intimately converſant with the works of the Roman claſsic authors. In ſelecting as his exemplar in Latin compoſition, that moſt elegant of all models, the ſtyle of Cicero, he manifeſted the diſcernment of true taſte. His ſpirited endeavours to imitate this exquiſite model, were far from being unſucceſsful. His diction is flowing, and his periods are well balanced. But by the occaſional admiſsion of barbarous words and unauthoriſed phraſeology, he reminds his reader, that at the time when he wrote, the iron age of literature was but lately terminated. His moſt ſtriking fault is diffuſeneſs—a diffuſeneſs which ſeems to ariſe, not ſo much from the copiouſneſs of his thoughts, as from the difficulty which he experienced in clearly expreſsing his ideas. It muſt, however, be obſerved, that he did not, like many modern authors who are celebrated for their Latinity, ſlaviſhly confine himſelf to the compilation of centos from the works of the ancients. In the proſecution of his literary labours, he drew from his own ſtores; and thoſe frequent alluſions to the cuſtoms and tranſactions of his own times, which render his writings

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ſo intereſting, muſt, at a period when the Latin language was juſt reſcued from the groſſeſt barbariſm, have rendered their compoſition peculiarly difficult. When compared with the works of his immediate predeceſſors, the writings of Poggio are truly aſtoniſhing. Riſing to a degree of elegance, to be ſought for in vain in the rugged Latinity of Petrarca and Coluccio Salutati, he prepared the way for the correctneſs of Politiano, and of the other eminent ſcholars whoſe gratitude has reflected ſuch ſplendid luſtre on the character of Lorenzo de' Medici.

FINIS.

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Poggii facetiae p. 442